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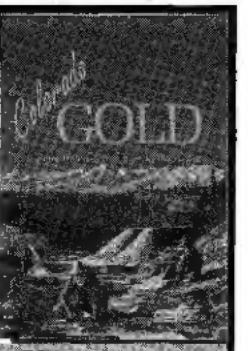

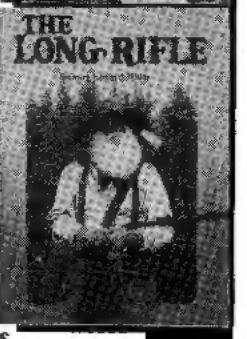

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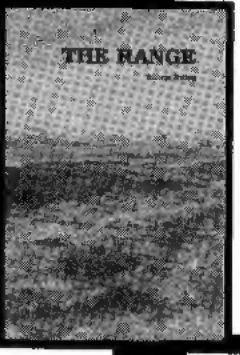

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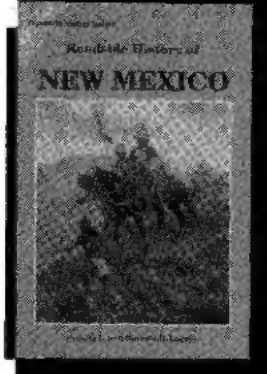

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Photos by Nancy S. Bostain

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"His Pride," by Chuck DeHaan.

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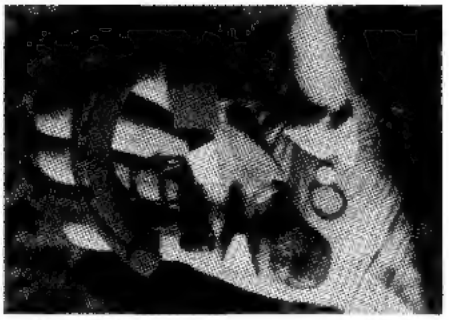

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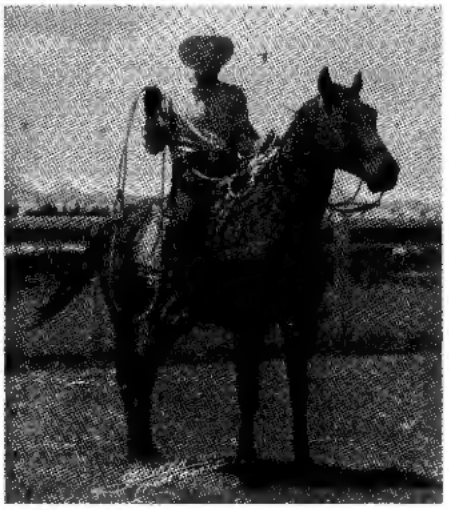

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From the Editor

Howdy, folks!

On an afternoon such as this, with warm blue skies and just enough breeze to turn the pages of a good book or magazine, I orter be outside readin' about the Old West in the shade of a nice tree. But I have this here monthly missive to afflict you all with, so I'm stuck indoors, admiring the weather through a double-glazed, floor-to-ceiling, heat intensifying window, out of which I can mostly see alley and the backside of the Baptist church.

Since I cain't actually do any western readin', I reckon the next best thing will be to tell you all about some of the best books and articles available this summer—namely the recently named winners of the Western Writers of America Spur Awards for 1991. WWA members are America's best published western authors, and the Spurs are awarded by the writers themselves.

To get my braggin' out of the way, Dan A. D'Amelio's "They Built the Great Wall of China, Didn't They?" (TRUE WEST, November 1991) was a finalist in the short nonfiction category. The winner was "Marching With the Army of the West," by James A. Crutchfield, in *Black Powder Annual*. Other finalists were "Against All Odds, Black Seminoles Won Their Freedom," by Scott Thybony in *Smithsonian* magazine, and "Sam Peckinpah: Outlaw of Celluloid," by Max Evans, in *Re-Arts and Letters*, published by Stephen F. Austin State University.

John S. Gray's landmark *Custer's Last Campaign* (University of Nebraska Press) won the Spur in the nonfiction book category. Finalists were Richard Selcer's *Hell's Half Acre* (Texas Christian University Press) and Edwin R. Sweeney's *Cochise: Chiricahua Apache Chief* (University of Oklahoma Press). You'll remember Selcer's article, "Cowboy-Booted Gumshoes," from the February 1992 TRUE WEST.

The Spur winner for best western cover art was *Cowboy Spurs and Their Makers*, Jane Pattie, photographer (and author). I once had the honor of introducing Jane on a panel. When I checked with her on the pronunciation of her name, she said, "It's just like cow patty." *Cowboy Spurs* deserved its Spur; it's a beautiful book. Finalists were *The Great Sioux War, 1876–77*, Paul Dyke, cover art (Montana Historical Press); *Red Cap*, Ronald Himler, artist (Penguin USA); and *The Sea Lion*, Neil Waldman, artist (Penguin USA).

If you sometimes stray from the nonfiction fold, Jory Sherman won the Spur for best novel of the West (more than 72,000 words) with *The Medicine Horn* (Tor Books). Finalists included *Honor at Daybreak*, by a giant among western writers and downright nice man, Elmer Kelton (Doubleday); and *The Search for Temperance Moon*, by Douglas C. Jones, another fine writer and previous Spur winner (Henry Holt & Co., Inc.).

Richard Matheson's *Journal of the Gun Years* (M. Evans) won the Spur for best western novel (fewer than 72,000 words). My fellow Oklahoman Robert J. Conley was a finalist with *Ned Christie's War* (M. Evans), as was Loren D. Estelman with *Sudden Country* (Doubleday).

Winner of the Spur award for best original paperback was *Rage in Chupadera*, by Norm Zollinger (Bantam Books). *The Sacred Stones*, by William Sarabande (Bantam Books), and *The Russian River*, by Gary McCarthy (Bantam Books) were finalists.

Benjamin Capps won the Spur for best western short fiction with "Cimarron, the Killer" in *Tales of the Southwest* (Doubleday). The finalists were "Etta's Pond," by Clay Reynolds (*Writer's Forum*); and "Anais" by Elroy Bode (*Commonplace Mysteries*).

For the youngster on your gift list, the best western juvenile fiction Spur went to Ben Mikaelsen's *Rescue Josh McGuire* (Walt Disney Co., Inc.). *Four of a Kind*, by Patti Sherlock (Holiday House); *High Trail to Danger*, by Joan Lowery Nixon (Bantam Books); and *The Monument*, by Gary Paulsen (Dell) were finalists.

Finally, the Medicine Pipe Bearer's Award for best first novel went to Max McCoy for *The Sixth Rider* (Doubleday). Susan Schofield's *Refugio, They Named You Wrong* (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill) and Bruce Thorstad's *Deadwood Dick and the Code of the West* (Pocket Books) were finalists.

There you have it: last year's best western writing. If you cain't find something to enjoy from that list, you're just not tryin'. Now that I've finished my chores, I'm a-gonna go find a patch of shade and read a good book.

John Joerschke

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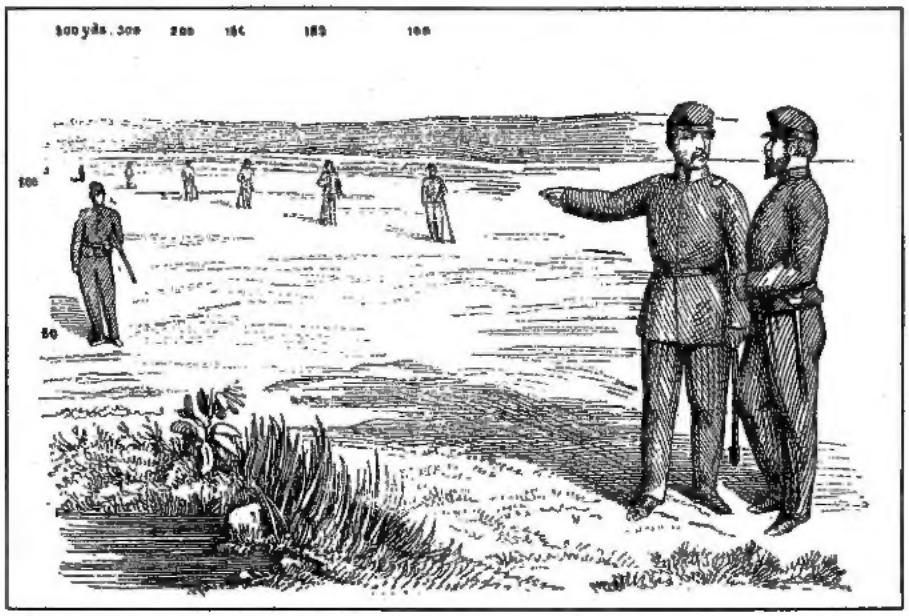
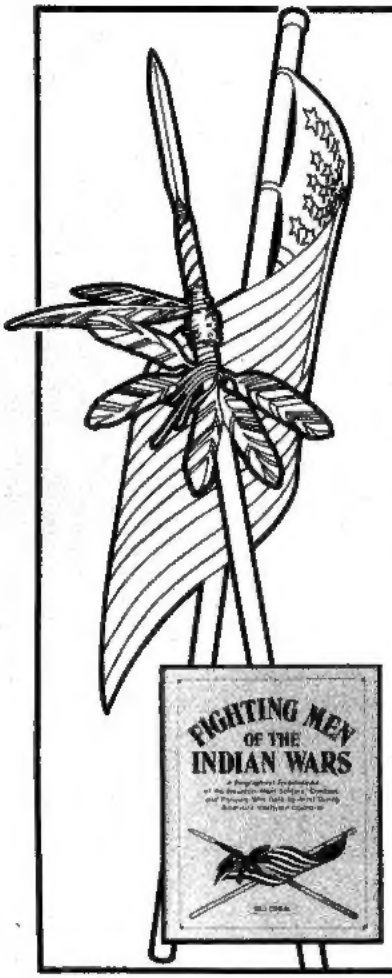
Long-Range Luck

I read Leon Day's "What Long Shot at Adobe Walls?" (TRUE WEST, March 1992) with great interest. I have studied—and done—long-range shooting since the 1940s, even with black powder rifles.

I would like to add a couple of comments to Day's article. First, the rifle: I have always heard it was a .50 Sharps, probably a special order (custom) .50-2½ or .50-3¼. This was the old-time designation, and the second number refers to the case length. Either would be capable of the ranges in question. I have seen a number of original examples of those scarce rifles alleged to be "buffalo rifles" fitted with long-range tang peep sights, calibrated—obviously optimistically—to 3,000 yards range. I do know that target shooters of that time



An 1873 illustration shows difficulty of seeing long-range targets.



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shot at ranges of 1,000 yards quite regularly.

As a matter of fact, *Wingate's Rifle Practice* published in 1873 gives considerable information on how to shoot those old-time howitzer trajectory rifles at long range, and I've tried it. It works . . . under perfect conditions.

So hitting a target at the ranges at Adobe Walls does not bother me; what does is seeing it.

In shooting at extremely long ranges, picking out a target at anything over 700 yards is difficult unless the target is huge, like the old United States Army 1,000-yard rifle target was. At those ranges a man looks like a pin-point in the best iron sights. (See the range estimation drawing from Wingate, enclosed.)

Hitting an area target—and seeing it—like a group of fifteen or so mounted men at such a range would be possible *if* you were able to estimate the range or happened to know it. Knowing that, I have always thought the long range hits at Adobe Walls resulted from long-range harassing fire intended to keep the Indians out of range, and I'll bet that's just what they were doing.—**Konrad F. Schreier, 1639 Mandeville Canyon Road, Los Angeles, California 90049.**

Over the Edge

An editor's note in the June TRUE WEST "Truly Western" asked for information about the Chinese laborers who were allegedly lowered over cliffs in baskets during construction of the Central Pacific Railroad. Contemporary accounts telling of a few deaths that occurred during the operation corroborate the methods, as do later well-researched books dealing with the Central Pacific.

Nor is the technique peculiar to or original to drilling holes for explosive charges on sheer walls of rock. More recently it has been used to scale the abuttment walls and surrounding dangerous rock conditions during the construction of Boulder Dam and to blast and shape the Mount Rushmore sculptures.

I was employed by the Rio Grande Railroad and am familiar with its similar use of "monkey seats." The Rio Grande used the monkey seats to drill and place charges of powder in trimming the sheer rock walls on the "High Line" of the Durango-Silverton segment of the D&RGW narrow gauge; at the rock tunnel between Antonito and Chama on the Cumbres Pass segment; and while building through the Black Canyon

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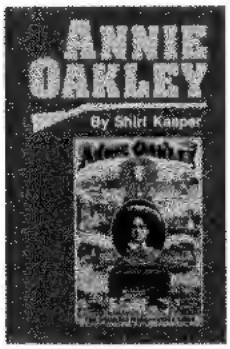

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It really is not as hazardous or as scary as it sounds. In 1937, while employed as a rodman by the Bureau of Reclamation, I rode a monkey seat up and down the walls of the Rio Grande River Gorge holding the stadia board while an instrument man using an alidade (plane table) mapped the face of the walls at a proposed dam site on the Colorado-New Mexico line. After the first couple days it became routine, although I personally closely inspected the winching rig and cable each morning.—**John Norwood, 5494 Estes Court, Arvada, Colorado 80002.**

A Friend of Nellie Yost

Thanks for the nice tribute you paid to Nellie Yost in "From the Editor" (TRUE WEST, May 1992). She was a splendid person as well as a great historical writer.

Nellie and I were friends for many years, both having been born in Nebraska and not too far apart. I first got acquainted with her back in the 1940s. In the 1950s we established a personal friendship and collaboration as writers. At that time she was working on *Pinnacle Jake*, a biography of her father.

About 1955 she wrote me that she was attempting to "write a man out of my house." The man was old John Leakey, a Texas cowboy who ended up in Montana. He had earlier self-published a book entitled *Grandad and I.* When he showed the book to Nellie, she told him it deserved republication, with added information on his personal experiences. John agreed immediately and went to North Platte, where he stayed until Nellie had completed her manuscript of his life. The result, *The West That Was, From Texas to Montana,* by John Leakey as told to Nellie Snyder Yost, was published by SMU Press at Dallas in 1958. That truly fine edition now sells on the rare book market for forty dollars or more—if you can find it.—**Harry E. Chrisman, 10245 West Fourteenth Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80215.**

Your letters and comments are welcome. Please keep letters to 300 words or less. All letters received by Western Publications will be considered for publication unless otherwise stipulated in the letter. Space does not permit us to print all letters we receive. Be sure to include full name, address, and zip code. Photos welcome. Address all letters to Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076.

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Museum of the Horse Opens

A new museum commemorating the horse throughout history opened in Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico, May 23. The Hubbard Museum's Anne C. Stradling Museum of the Horse, housed near the Ruidoso Downs Race Track, occupies a newly renovated 40,000-square-foot building and contains a multi-million dollar collection of over 10,000 horse-related items.

Anne Stradling began collecting the items at the age of six. Her home, an estate in Far Hills, New Jersey, became the showcase for much of the collection, which she continued to build throughout her life. Stradling became an accomplished horsewoman and eventually settled on an Arizona ranch, where she introduced western horse memorabilia to her collection.

The Museum of the Horse consists of thousands of artifacts from all over the world. It includes not only items from the American West, such as a Pony Express saddle with its original tree, but also horse brasses from England; fine paintings, drawings, and bronzes by master artists; delicately carved horse figures from China; wagon and horse decorations in brass and silver from Germany; and saddles from Mexico and China. The museum also contains an extensive collection of Indian artifacts, pots, and Kachina dolls.

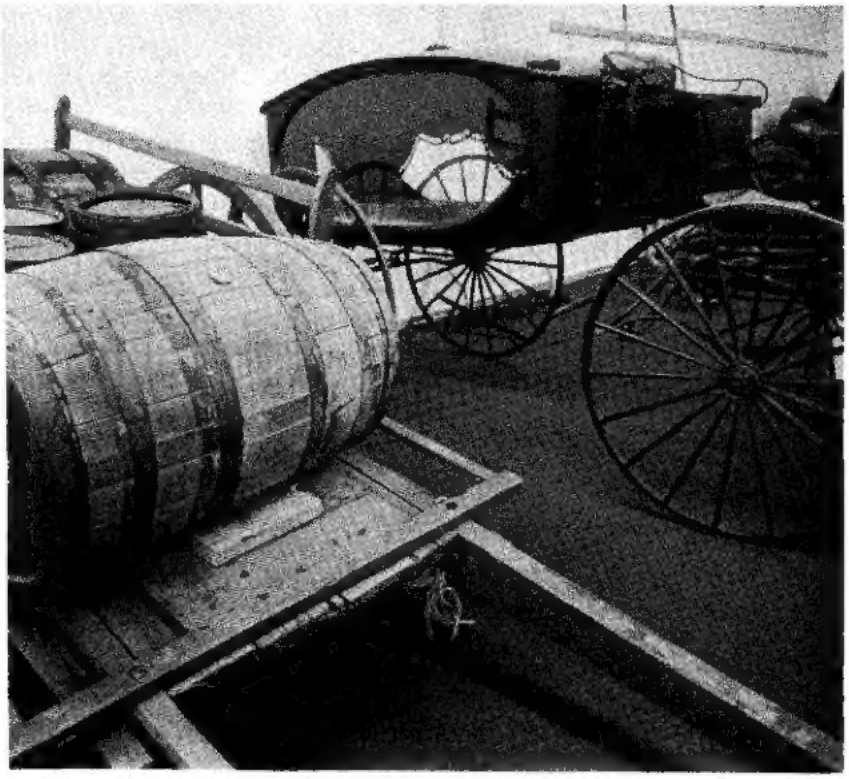
Many horse-drawn vehicles highlight the collection. They include carriages, wagons, a Russian sleigh, a western stage coach, a fire engine, and a 400-year-old Mexican ox cart.

"We are excited about the tremendous opportunity that the Ruidoso area has in the Museum of the Horse," said Joan Dale Hubbard, whose foundation provides financial support to the new museum. "It represents a tremendous asset to the community and a marvelous educational and cultural opportunity to visitors to New Mexico."

The museum will also house three life-sized bronzes from New Mexico artist Dave McGary. Entitled "Rain In The Face," "Iron That Walks," and "American Horse," the bronzes are representations of Native Americans from bygone eras. Rain In The Face is presently at the museum, and the other two pieces will complete the collection in spring or early summer 1993.

McGary learned the story of Rain In The Face through Indian lore passed from generation to generation. The massive bronze depicts a Sioux warrior, tired from battle. His posture is slightly slumped, and a war shield dangles loosely from two fingers. He is a *heyoka,*

(see Horse, *page 11)*



Horse-drawn vehicles and other fine exhibits highlight the Museum of the Horse in Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico.

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Members of the First Cavalry Horse Platoon mount a charge.

Cavalry Association To Ride Custer's Trail

By DAVID F. CROSBY

The First Cavalry Division was destined for many military honors when it was created in 1921. But the four Indian Wars-era cavalry regiments that comprised the division already had rich histories of their own. One of them, the Seventh Cavalry, had followed Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer to defeat at the Little Bighorn June 25, 1876. Now the First Cavalry Division Association, formed of former First Cavalry Division members, is planning a trail ride in the Little Bighorn area to honor the Seventh Cavalry's heritage.

The Association is holding its forty-fifth reunion August 5–9 at the Sheraton Hotel in Billings, Montana. On August 2 the group is sponsoring a three-day wagon train ride to the Little Bighorn National Battlefield. Members of the First Cavalry Horse Platoon will lead the 116-mile march which will retrace the route of Custer's ill-fated campaign. Organizers expect twenty wagons and fifty saddle horses.

The Seventh Cavalry joined three other cavalry regiments at Fort Bliss, Texas, to form the First Cavalry Division. Congress had authorized the division in 1920, primarily to defend the United States' border with Mexico.

The division was dismounted in 1943 and sent to Australia for training in jungle warfare. During World War II it fought in the Admiralty Islands and the Philippines; later it saw action in Korea and, as a mobile air division, in Vietnam. In 1991 it participated in the Persian Gulf War.

Division members formed the First Cavalry Division Association in the Admiralty Islands in 1944 to preserve old friendships as well as the unit's heritage. The non-profit soldiers' and veterans' fraternity now includes 22,000 members and is headquartered in Copperas Cove, Texas, although other states have chapters.

All former First Division members are eligible to join the Association, others can be associate members. Former division members wanting to participate in the Little Bighorn ride may write to HQ, First Cavalry Division Association, 302 North Main, Copperas Cove, Texas 76522-1799, or call 1 (800) 234-9313.

C.M. Russell's Letters on Exhibit

The C.M. Russell Museum in Great Falls, Montana, is featuring through mid-September an exhibition of western artist Charles M. Russell's letters, illustrations, and poems. Entitled "Regards to the Bunch," the display exhibits a significant number of the museum's collection of Russell letters, and is accompanied by a newly released book of the same title. The museum owns the largest known single collection of Russell letters.

Russell's letters are humorous, original, uninhibited, and filled with his distinctive language and outlook on life and the West. Russell most often wrote them in cowboy vernacular and incorporated creative phonetic spellings. Russell's letters help illustrate him as a man, offering a glimpse of his acute yet often subtle humor, his great imagination, his depth of sensitivity, and his abiding love for the West.

Many of Russell's friends saved his letters as mementos of a beloved and uncommon man. Each letter was a gift to its recipient, who cherished it not only for the drawings it might include, but for the words and sentiments as well. As Will Rogers said in his introduction to *Good Medicine*, an earlier publication of Russell letters, "He could paint you a picture, and send you a letter with it, and you would value the letter more than you would the picture."

The C.M. Russell Museum is at 400 Thirteenth Street North in Great Falls. Summer hours through the end of September are from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday; 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday. Admission is four dollars for adults, three dollars for senior citizens, and two dollars for students. Admission is free to children five and under.

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Horse

(continued from page 9)

one who communes with thunderbirds. Below his distinctive wolf's headdress, his facial warpaint is streaked with the rain he has called upon his enemies, thus earning his name.

McGary excels at recreating heroes from the past. Two of his bronzes, "Horse Thief" and "Buffalo Warrior," are in the permanent collection of the White House in Washington, D.C.

McGary is the son of a ranching family in Cody, Wyoming. As a teenager, he studied the art of bronze-making using the lost wax method in Italy. He also studied under American sculptor Harry Jackson, and a year later ran the wax room at the Shidoni Foundry in Tesuque, New Mexico. There he met Kevin Yellow Mountain, who introduced McGary to his uncle, Gerald Red Elk, a historian for a Sioux tribe in Little Eagle, South Dakota. The elder Sioux showed McGary the ways and beliefs of Native Americans. Eventually the Sioux Nation adopted him as a member of the tribe.

Another exhibit, "Horse Tales: An Evolutionary Odyssey," is on display at the Museum of the Horse. The display is a joint effort of the museum and the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science in Albuquerque.

The natural history museum has retained one component of the display, which explains the evolution of the horse, its disappearance from North America about 10,000 years ago, and its reintroduction 500 years ago. The second component, housed at the Museum of the Horse, details the origins of horse breeding, the training and behavior of the horse, and the contemporary uses of tack. The exhibit includes saddles, bridles, and bits, both modern and antique. A display of various horseshoes offers a glimpse at equine footwear.

The Museum of the Horse is open daily, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Admission is four dollars for adults; $2.50 for children ages five through eighteen; and three dollars for people over sixty-five. Admission is free to children under five and museum members.

Western Roundup is a report on places to go and things to see associated with the history of the Old West. Submissions are welcome. Information on scheduled events should be submitted at least four months prior to the event. Items on historic places are also welcome. Send information including photos to: Western Roundup, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076.

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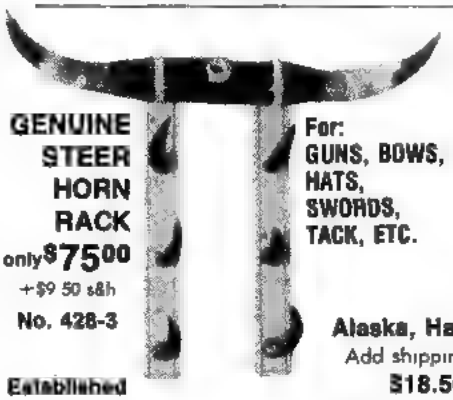

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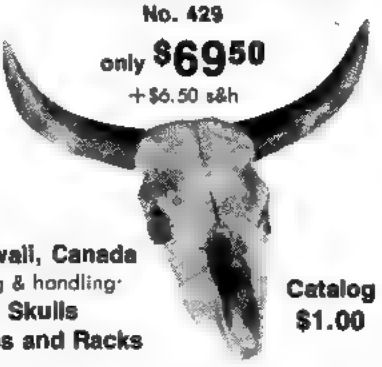

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"Doc" and Billy the Kid

By CHUCK PARSONS

Billy the Kid and those around him always spark interest among western history enthusiasts. Bryan Conn, P.O. Box 674, McDowell, Kentucky 41647, wants to know about one such man, "Doc" Scurlock.

Josiah Gordon Scurlock was born at Tallapoosa, Alabama, January 11, 1849. He studied medicine in New Orleans, hence the nickname "Doc." As a young man he went to Mexico but soon returned to the United States and worked for cattle king John Chisum in Texas and later in New Mexico. A dispute over wages caused him to leave Chisum's employ.

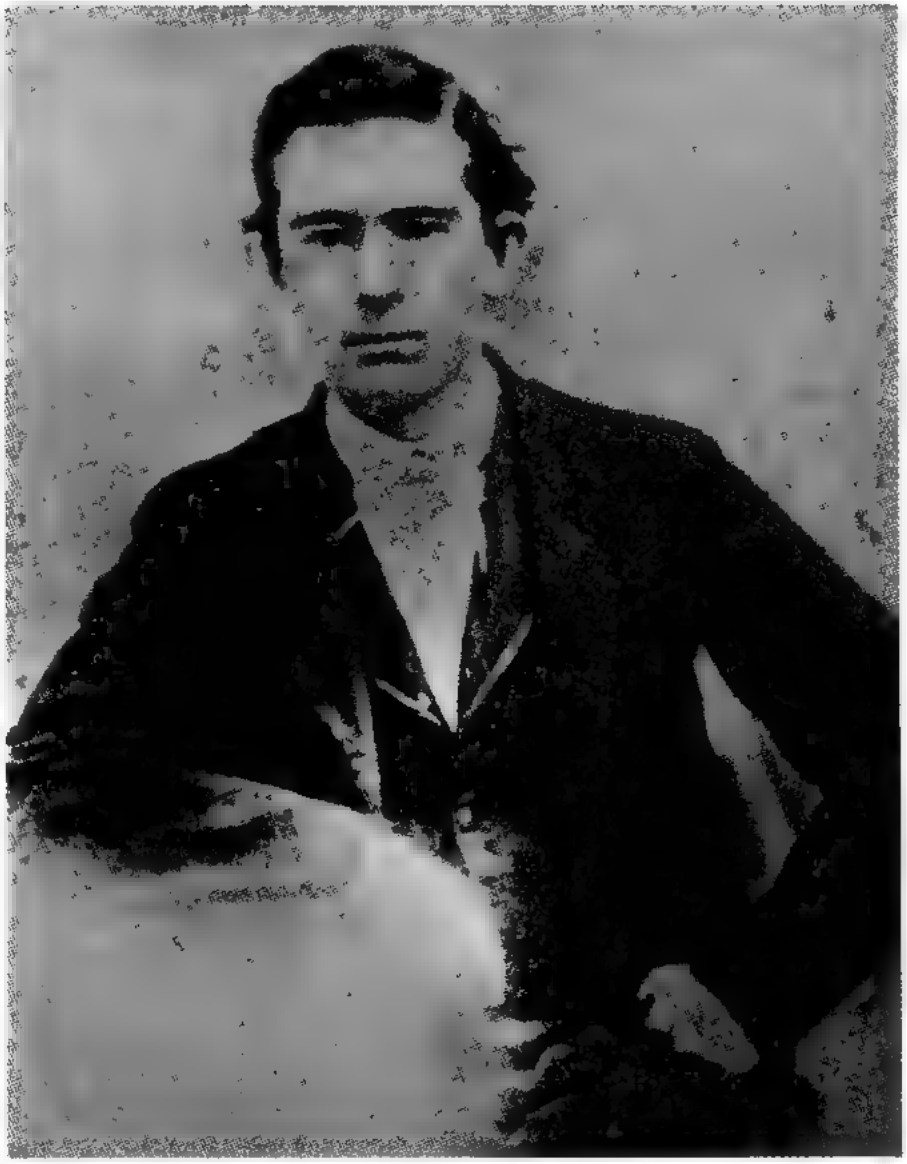
Besides having medical skills, Doc was handy with a gun. He lost his front teeth in a fight over a card game, but his opponent lost his life.

By the late 1870s Scurlock was in Lincoln County, New Mexico. He operated a cheese factory with Charlie Bowdre on the Gila River (Billy the Kid was one of their employees), practiced medicine, and taught school. Tragedy struck when Scurlock accidentally shot and killed a friend, Mike Harkins, on September 2, 1876, while they were cleaning a gun. On October 19, 1876, Scurlock married sixteen-year-old Antonia Meguela Herrera; they had ten children.

Scurlock became embroiled in the political and economic battles known as the Lincoln County War which began in 1878. He sided with the McSween faction and became a partisan "regulator" along with Bowdre and the Kid. He participated in several clashes during the "war," but turned his back on the turmoil in 1879 and returned to Texas, where he worked in a variety of places and jobs.

Scurlock lived for a while on the LX Ranch in Potter County, taught school in Vernon, and drifted on to Cleburne and Granbury. Unfortunately for history, he adamantly refused to discuss his past.

In his later years Doc Scurlock read extensively, wrote poetry, ran a confectionary store, and worked for the state highway department. He died July 25, 1929, and is buried in Eastland Cemetery, Eastland, Texas. A large granite stone marks both Scurlock's and his wife's graves. Philip J. Rasch, Joseph E. Buckbee, and Karl K. Klein published what is perhaps the most complete biography of Scurlock, "A Man of Many Parts," in the January 1963 *English Westerners Brand Book*.



Josiah Gordon Scurlock as a young man.

Verdict on Bob Ford

With the many articles and claims about Jesse James living into the twentieth century, it is not surprising to hear someone ask if anyone ever proved Bob Ford killed Jesse. Such a question comes from Henry Wilson, 127 Main Street, Laurel, Maryland 20707.

If one demands the proof a jury would

require, the answer is no; however, there is enough evidence that only the most obstinate person would not accept that Bob Ford, accompanied by his brother Charlie, killed Jesse on April 3, 1882. We must accept the statements of Jesse's wife and mother who said the man killed in the little house at 1318 Lafayette Street in St. Joseph, Missouri, was indeed Jesse James.

Many former companions from Jesse's guerrilla days, and a few of his enemies, positively identified the body. Seven members of a coroner's jury signed a statement which said "the body of the deceased is that of Jesse W. James and. . . he came to his death by a wound in the head, caused by a pistol shot fired intentionally by the hand of Robert Ford."

On April 17 Bob and Charlie Ford were both indicted for murder. The act was a formality, but necessary to allow Missouri Governor Thomas Crittenden to pardon them for their deed.

Jesse's son, Jesse Edwards James, raised a point when others were claiming to be the real Jesse James. If Jesse had lived beyond April 3, 1882, why did he never visit his two children? The question has never been explained away.

Frank James' Death

Frank James often generates as much interest as his brother Jesse. Ted Nolff, P.O. Box 87, 209 North Van Buren Street, Bloomingdale, Michigan 49026, asks how and where Frank died.

Alexander Franklin James died of natural causes February 18, 1915, at his home near Kearney, Missouri. According to his wishes his body was cremated; the ashes were stored in a vault in Kansas City until his widow, Ann Ralston James, died and her body, too, was cremated. The ashes of both are buried in Hill Park Cemetery, Twentieth Street and Williams Avenue, Independence, Missouri. The graves are marked.

If you have a question, send it to Chuck Parsons, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. Please keep questions brief. Sign your full name and address, including zip code. Names and addresses will be published if question is used. Space limitations may not permit us to use all questions.

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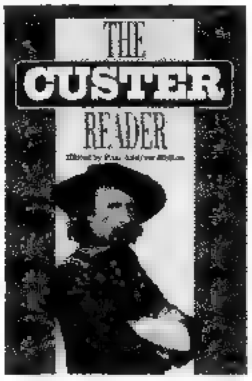

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The Pinkertons and the Train Robbers

By RICHARD PATTERSON

At times during the train robbery era it seemed as if the Pinkerton's National Detective Agency's sole mission was to pursue every train robber to his grave. That was exactly what the Pinkertons wanted those criminals to believe, and it was effective propaganda. Actually, chasing train robbers was only a small part of the Pinkerton Agency's total business, but thanks to a carefully orchestrated public relations campaign, the Pinkertons took much of the credit for ridding the nation of those bandits.

Allan Pinkerton created the agency in Chicago in 1855 to assist six midwestern railroad and express companies investigate labor problems, thefts of company property, and serious customer complaints. Pinkerton had arrived in America from Scotland in 1843. Four years later, while operating a small cooperage northwest of Chicago, he happened upon a camp of counterfeiters and later was instrumental in their arrest. Local merchants, suffering heavy losses from bogus bills, offered to hire Pinkerton on a part-time basis to watch out for counterfeiters. Pinkerton engineered more arrests and shortly thereafter gave up the cooperage for full-time detective work.

National Archives

The offices of Pinkerton's National Detective Agency in New York City, circa 1902.

Pinkerton's success brought him to the attention of the United States Treasury Department, which, at the time, had no investigative force of its own. The government hired him to investigate counterfeiting cases in Illinois. He secured a deputy's job with the Cook County sheriff, and in 1855 he resigned to open his own detective agency.

In addition to investigative work for the railroads and other business clients, Pinkerton became a special agent for the postal department. Also, through his railroad contacts, he picked up clients among several national express firms, including the giant Adams Express Company.

Adams executives recommended him to eastern railroads, and in 1861 Pinkerton opened a branch office with five operatives in Philadelphia to accommodate a major new client, the Pennsylvania, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad. His contact with that railroad led Pinkerton to uncover a possible plot to assassinate president-elect Abraham Lincoln on a train trip from Illinois to Washington, D.C. Pinkerton's role in getting Lincoln safely to the capital resulted in lucrative contracts for secret

service work during the Civil War.

The nation's industrialists noticed Pinkerton's wartime exploits, and his detective business grew rapidly, especially among railroads and express companies, during the postwar years. Thus, when a gang of midwestern outlaws decided to attack a moving train and rob the express car, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency got the job of hunting them down.

The nation's first peacetime train robbery occurred on a cold and rainy October night in 1866. The target was an Ohio & Mississippi passenger train out of East St. Louis bound for Cincinnati. As the train wound its way through the gently rolling hills of southern Indiana, near the small town of Seymour on the east fork of the White River, two masked men slipped into the unlocked Adams Express Company car and ordered the messenger to turn over his keys to the two safes. The messenger had a key only to the "local" safe, which carried little cash. The robbers quickly emptied it and then turned to the large through safe. They studied it a few seconds, then dragged it over to the door and tipped it over the edge into the darkness. After pulling the bell cord to stop the train, they jumped off, ran back to the safe, pried open the door, and cleaned out the contents.

Under Pinkerton's contract with the Adams Express Company, the agency was to investigate most major losses. Within hours after learning of the robbery at Seymour, Pinkerton was on a train bound for the scene of the crime.

ON ARRIVING at Seymour, Pinkerton found that several respectable citizens claimed they already knew the identity of the train robbers. They suspected the Reno gang, an operation headed up by four lawless brothers who became the archetypes for similar outlaw clans that would later roam the West.

The Reno family had a bad reputation dating back to the early 1860s, when the clan's father, Wilkerson Reno, was accused of burning out nearly an entire town, nearby Rockford, to buy up land for the gang's stronghold. Locals suspected the brothers themselves, especially the two oldest, Frank and John, in numerous crimes, but no one had ever brought a Reno to trial. Through fear and intimidation, the gang had the county by the throat, and local courts gave them little trouble.

Allan Pinkerton saw an even larger problem—the ease with which the robbers accomplished the crime. He worried

Both, Pinkertons, Inc.

Robert A. Pinkerton (left) and William A. Pinkerton.

The nation's industrialists noticed Pinkerton's wartime exploits, and his detective business grew rapidly during the postwar years. Thus, when a gang of midwestern outlaws decided to attack a moving train and rob the express car, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency got the job of hunting them down.

that when word got around other outlaws would attempt express car assaults. He advised the Adams Express Company to have all rollers removed from the bottoms of safes, and have the safes bolted to the floors and walls of the express cars.

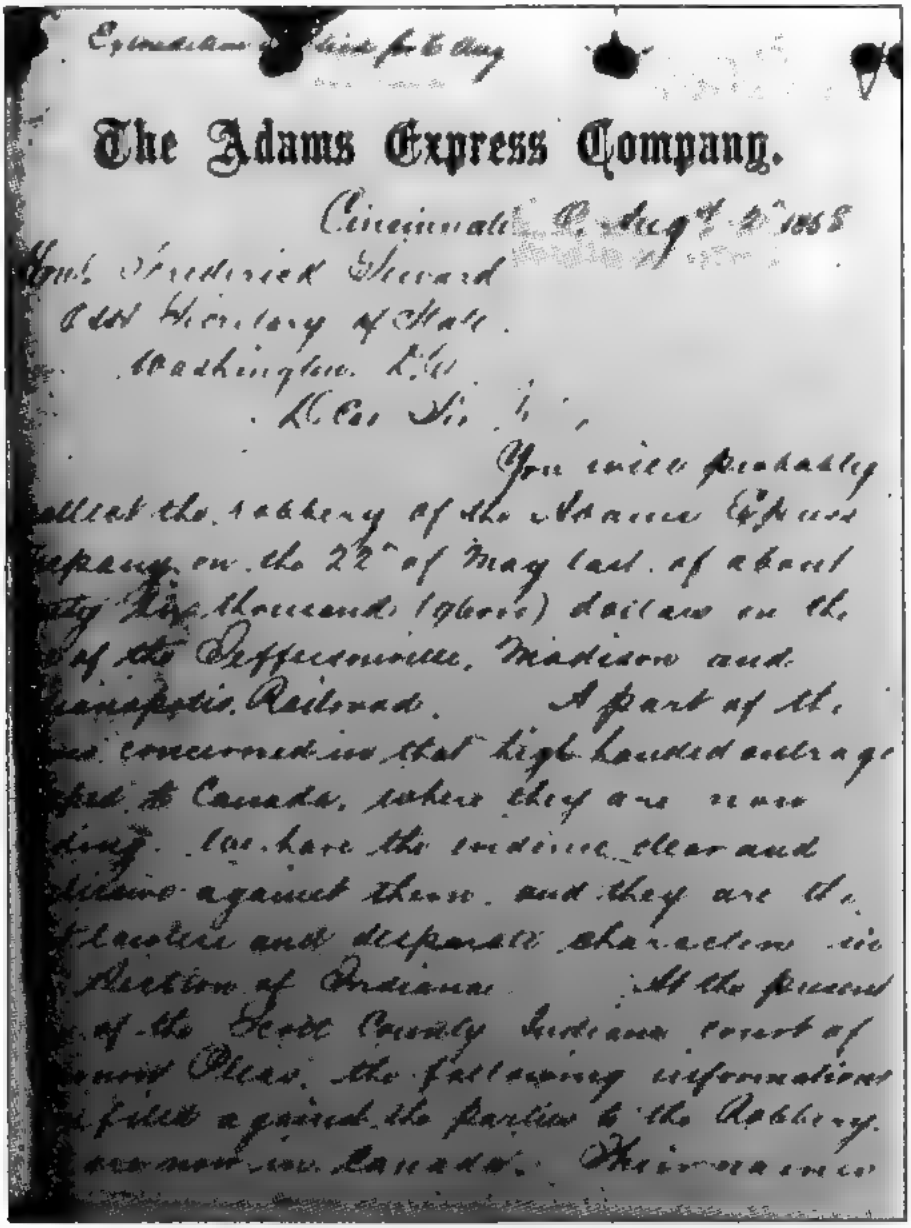
Pinkerton's concern was well-founded. Just five days later, on October 11, four men unfastened a rail on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad near Briscoe Station, Kentucky. The train, carrying an L&N paycar, derailed, and the robbers stole $8,000 from the paymaster. In just five days a brand new form of crime had evolved.

On November 9, robbers hit the Louisville & Nashville again, this time near Franklin, Kentucky. A barricade of crossties knocked a passenger train carrying a federal payroll off the tracks, and a gang of twelve men, their faces blackened with soot, descended upon the wreck and robbed the paycar and passengers. The railroads and express companies now had to face a dreadful truth—something that should have been obvious to train officials and was now obvious to criminals—moving trains were not difficult to rob.

Back at Seymour, Indiana, several of his operatives joined Pinkerton and they circulated around town asking questions. They learned that several witnesses had seen John Reno and a younger brother, Simeon, boarding the train just before the robbery. Further investigation revealed that footprints at the trackside where the safe landed matched those made by the boots of the same two Reno brothers and a companion, Frank Sparks. Also, in the weeks following the holdup, witnesses had seen the three suspects flashing large sums of money, reportedly as much as $1,500.

While Pinkerton and his investigators gathered information, the gang suddenly packed up and headed west to Gallatin, Missouri. There they broke into the Daviess County treasurer's office and emptied two safes of about $22,000.

What happened next is debatable. Some sources say the usually accepted story is true; others suggest Pinkerton fabricated it for publicity. According to the story, when Pinkerton learned that John Reno, who had returned to Indiana, had been positively identified at the scene of the Gallatin robbery, he wired the Daviess County sheriff to come to Cincinnati with a warrant for Reno's arrest. Pinkerton then arranged for an operative to lure Reno to the Seymour train station on a pretext, and Pinkerton and two burly aides whisked



The Adams Express Company.

Cincinnati O. Aug 7 1868

Hon. Frederick Seward
Asst Secretary of State.
Washington D.C.

Sir,

You will probably recollect the robbery of the Adams Express Company on the 22nd of May last of about Forty Five Thousand ($45000) Dollars on the line of the Jeffersonville, Madison and Indianapolis Railroad. A part of the parties concerned in that high handed outrage have fled to Canada, where they are now residing. We have the evidence clear and positive against them and they are desperate characters and desperate characters in the State of Indiana. At the present term of the Scott County Indiana Court of Common Pleas the following informations are filed against the parties to the Robbery. [illegible] Canada. [illegible]

National Archives

A letter from Allan Pinkerton to Assistant Secretary of State Frederick Seward requesting extradition of Reno gang members from Canada.

the outlaw off the platform and onto an eastbound train. At Cincinnati, they turned Reno over to the Daviess County sheriff, and two days later the outlaw was sitting in a Gallatin jail. But another version of the story has Pinkerton taking no part in Reno's capture. It says law enforcement officers, without any help from the Pinkertons, picked up Reno when he returned to Indiana.

Once John Reno was in jail, Allan Pinkerton set his sights on brother Frank Reno, who had fled with the gang to Iowa. This time Pinkerton sent his oldest son, William, then just twenty-two years old. The young detective did well, and with the help of local authorities, quickly rounded up Frank and three members of the gang. William's joy was short-lived, however; within days the outlaws punched a hole in the ancient brick wall of their cell and escaped.

The gang returned to Indiana to resume robbing trains. But in July 1868, at Brownstown, Indiana, they made a fatal mistake; they tried to bribe a locomotive engineer, who informed the railroad. As the gang approached the express car, Pinkerton operatives met them with a barrage of gunfire. Battered and bleeding, the outlaws fled into a nearby woods.

Three of the gang were later captured, but they never made it to trial. As the outlaws were being taken to Brownstown for arraignment, a mob of Seymour residents, fearing they would escape justice through bribes or extortion, dragged them off the train and hanged them from a beech tree beside the tracks.

The hangings marked the beginning of the end for the Reno gang. On July 27, William and Simeon Reno were captured in Indianapolis. A short time later, Pinkerton operatives discovered Frank Reno and another gang member, Charlie Anderson, hiding out in Windsor, Ontario. But they, too, would never see a courtroom. The following December, angry citizens once again settled the score personally. On the night of December 11, a mob broke into the Floyd County jail, where authorities had transferred the outlaws for safekeeping, and hanged all four.

SCATTERED rumors, none of them proven, held that the Pinkertons were involved in the lynchings, or at least did little to discourage them. In fact, evidence exists that Allan Pinkerton warned authorities that the Floyd County jail was vulnerable, and suggested that the prisoners be housed in the more secure Marion County jail in Indianapolis.

While pursuing the Reno gang, Pinkerton learned a valuable lesson. Train robbery, a new and exciting crime, commanded headlines. Whoever was prominently involved in the ensuing chase enjoyed the nation's attention. Handled right, it could mean favorable publicity and new business for the agency.

But the Pinkertons would not have a lock on train robbery investigations. As a result of the robberies in Indiana and Kentucky, the larger railroads and express companies, anticipating assaults on their cars, strengthened their security and investigative departments. Foremost were the Southern Pacific Railroad and Wells, Fargo & Company, both of which employed capable special agents. Thus, when train robbery arrived in the Far West with an attack on a Wells, Fargo express car on the Southern Pacific line in November 1870 near Verdi, Nevada, the Pinkertons had no part in solving the crime.

The next year, however, the Pinkerton agency was back in the headlines. In the fall of 1871, the Southern Express Company engaged the Pinkertons to track down a gang of robbers, led by two brothers, Hilary and Levi Farrington, which was operating along the rail lines bordering the Mississippi River across from New Madrid, Missouri. Allan Pinkerton again assigned son William to the case. With the help of several Southern Express Company special agents, William scoured the riverbank towns in western Kentucky.

At Lester's Landing in Fulton County, they found the suspects operating a small general store, which they apparently used as a cover for their real business, train robbery. The detectives surrounded the store and moved in. A gunfight erupted and one of the suspects was killed. William Pinkerton suffered a shot in the side, and Patrick Connell, one of the Southern Express agents, took one in the stomach. According to an account the Pinkertons released to newspapers, William, although bleeding profusely himself, removed the bullet from Connell's gut with a corn knife, likely saving the agent's life.

By the 1870s, Pinkerton's railroad and express contracts stretched as far west as Kansas City. Thus the agency played a prominent role in the pursuit of Missouri outlaws Jesse and Frank James.

Although sources are sketchy, Pinkerton agents were apparently involved in the chase following the James gang's first train robbery, on the Rock Island line in July 1873 near Adair, Iowa. Clues they picked up in the days following the holdup suggested that the robbers had ridden up from western Missouri. As investigators knew the Jameses and Youngers operated in that area, suspicion fell on them. A posse left from Iowa, but failed to arrest any suspects.

While the publicity the Pinkerton agency gained from chasing train robbers was usually favorable, in the case of the James-Younger gang it backfired. Following another James-Younger train robbery, this one at Gads Hill, Missouri, in January 1874, a Pinkerton operative, Joseph W. Witcher (sometimes spelled Whicher), was killed while on the outlaws' trail. A few days later another Pinkerton agent, Louis Lull, died in a shootout with John and Jim Younger. Allan Pinkerton took the deaths personally. He wrote to an agency supervisor that "my blood was spilt, and they [the Jameses and Youngers] must repay, there is no use talking, they must die."

On the night of January 26, 1875, during an unsuccessful raid on the James family homestead in Clay County, Missouri, the attackers, believed to be mostly Pinkerton men, tossed an incendiary device into the house. One of the family members kicked it into the fireplace where it exploded, killing the outlaws' younger step-brother and severely injuring their mother. Allan Pinkerton never denied that his operatives were involved, and privately he commented to insiders that he felt justified for such action because of the deaths of Witcher and Lull.

Union Pacific Railroad Museum Collection

William A. Pinkerton (center) during the hunt for the Farrington brothers in 1871. The other men are special agents of the Southern Express Company

The idea that the James brothers were really Robin Hood-types, bent on thwarting the giant railroad and express industries, spread beyond Missouri and eventually glamorized the crime of train robbery itself. The train robber became the "long rider," an elite outlaw type whom lesser criminals envied.

Western Missouri newspapers condemned the raid and blasted the Pinkertons for "hunting for hire." Angry legislators introduced a resolution in the Missouri General Assembly to investigate the incident, but railroad interests squelched it. Public condemnation continued, however, evoking sympathy for the James brothers and creating the myth that Jesse and Frank were really "social bandits"—outlaws who chose a life of crime as a protest against oppressive authority.

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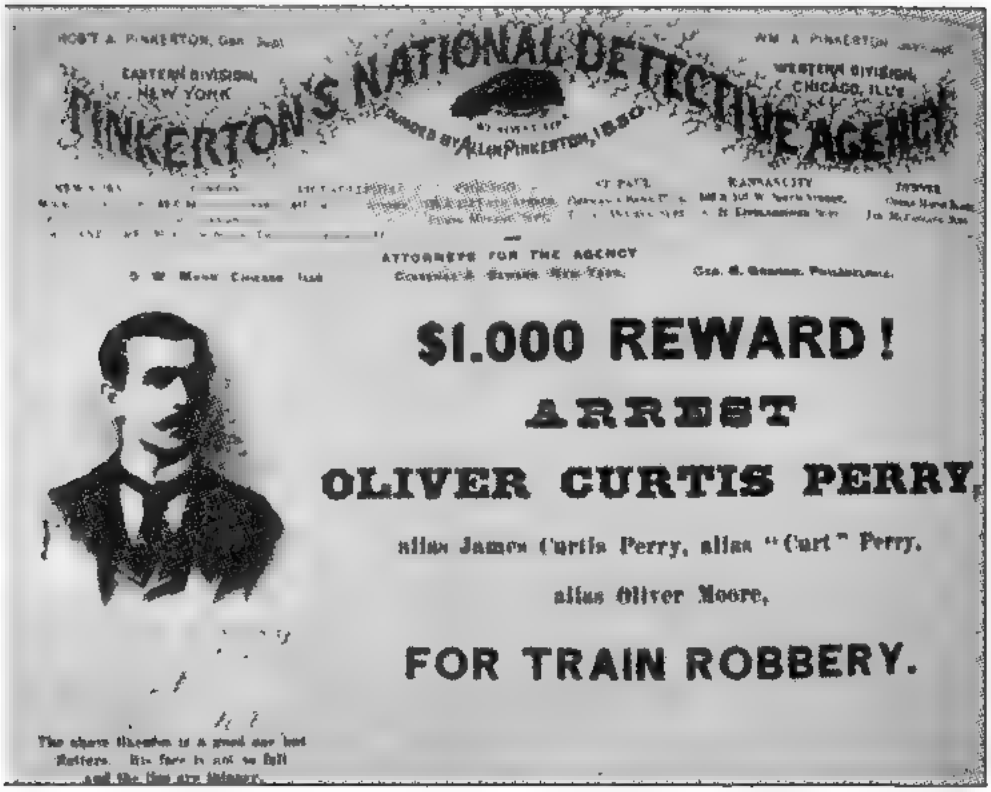


Author's Collection

A Pinkerton poster offering a reward for train robber Oliver Curtis Perry, circa 1891.

Some agencies hired thugs and incompetent operatives, and some continually cheated their clients with false information and padded expense vouchers. The Pinkerton brothers did not want their firm to suffer for the faults of others and tried to keep the agency's name favorably before the public.

eventually glamorized the crime of train robbery itself. The train robber came to command a special place in the pecking order of outlawry. He became the "long rider," an elite outlaw type whom lesser criminals envied. Even many honest folk admired the train robber's daring. To them he was more than a mere criminal—he was a bold adventurer. No doubt this infuriated Allan Pinkerton, and possibly strengthened his determination to put as many train robbers as possible behind bars.

Perhaps because of this resolve, Pinkerton left the day-to-day operation of his agency to his capable general manager, George H. Bangs, and personally took charge of, or at least closely worked on, most of the firm's train robbery investigations. Later, when Allan's sons William and Robert took over the agency, they continued the practice.

Allan Pinkerton's revulsion over public admiration of train robbers, coupled with his obsession for publicity, led him to produce, "in order to set the record straight," a "fact-based" detective novel about chasing train bandits. The book, *The Expressman and the Detective*, published in 1875, describes in detail the Pinkertons' relentless efforts to track down express car robbers and "secure" confessions. Pinkerton's intention was to tell the real, "unglamorous," story of train robbery and deter would-be train robbers, but some reviewers criticized the book as too cold-blooded. However, it sold over 15,000 copies in its first two months of publication and engendered so much publicity for the agency it encouraged Allan Pinkerton to produce more. Between 1875 and 1884, Pinkerton turned out sixteen similar books on various crimes and criminal investigations. Although the books carried his name, he did not actually write them. Instead, he dictated notes from the agency's files, which he turned over to a team of professional writers.

Allan Pinkerton's health began to fail, and upon his death in 1884 sons William and Robert took control of the firm. At first the brothers simply divided the operations geographically, with William taking the western half of the country and Robert the eastern. In theory the brothers had equal power; however, Robert, the younger of the two, showed greater management skills and was soon advising William on business matters. William, on the other hand, had a greater talent for investigation and was better suited for chasing criminals. This stood him well in the firm's western division, as train robbery had moved west to places where rails outdistanced a company's ability to defend them, and desolate miles of track were made to order for banditry.

THE SUCCESS of Pinkerton's National Detective Agency spawned many other detective firms. By the mid-1880s fourteen such agencies existed in Chicago alone, and a handful were spread throughout the western states. None, however, approached the success of the Pinkerton agency, which had always differed from its competitors in its management style. The Pinkertons operated in a businesslike manner and "work-demeanor" was important; it impressed not only railroad and express company executives, but also top management people in other industries who saw that the firm appreciated the importance of business ideology in American society. That image led to lucrative contracts for labor investigations, industrial security, and espionage work, which eventually became the agency's mainstay.

The Pinkerton agency's success kept it well ahead of its competitors. While detective firms proliferated during the 1880s, many had poor reputations. Some agencies hired thugs and incompetent operatives, and some continually cheated their clients with false information and padded expense vouchers. The Pinkerton brothers did not want their firm to suffer for the faults of others and tried to keep the agency's name favorably and continually before the public. For obvious reasons, breaking strikes and spying on labor-union activity did not spawn good public relations. Capturing outlaws did, however, and William and Robert sought mileage from the headlines train robberies created But, as in the James brothers' situatior the publicity was not always good The Fotheringham-Wittrock case is a example.

David S. Fotheringham was a messenger for the Adams Express Com

pany. On October 26, 1886, he claimed that, while on a St. Louis & San Francisco westbound night run, a man posing as a new Adams employee beat and robbed him. Fotheringham claimed that, before the robber jumped off the train with nearly $90,000 from the express car safe, he boasted his name was Jim Cummings and that he was a former James gang member.

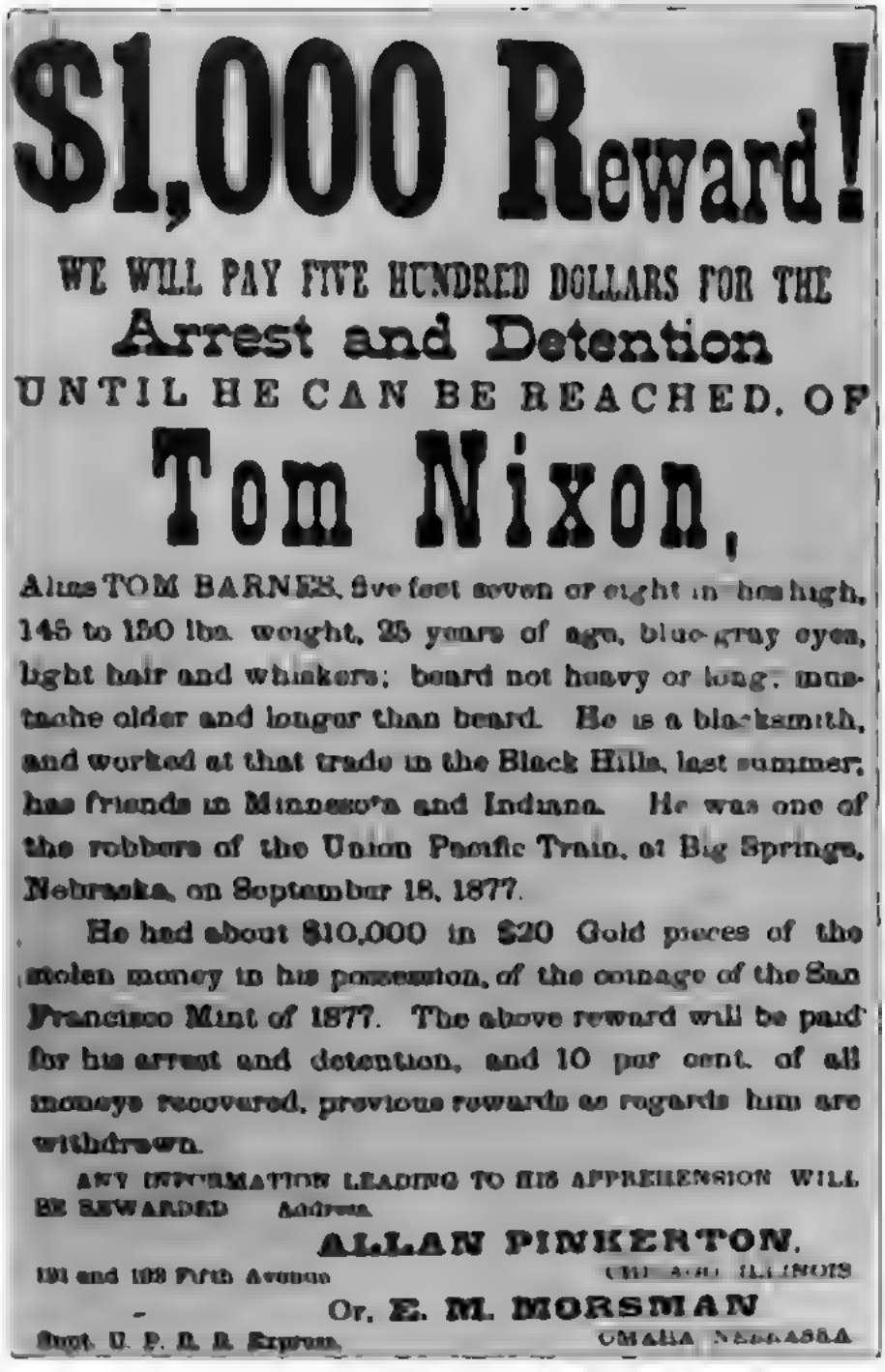
Robert Pinkerton, handling the case for the Adams company while William handled other matters, was skeptical of Fotheringham's story, and suggested pressuring the messenger for a confession. Pinkerton operatives, with the approval of local authorities, took him to a hotel room in St. Louis and grilled him for a week. He maintained his innocence, however, and eventually won release through a writ of *habeas corpus*. In the meantime the Pinkertons captured the robber, identified at Fred Wittrock, a former bookkeeper from Leavenworth, Kansas. They also picked up three accomplices. All four pleaded guilty, and one implicated Fotheringham, who, the accomplice said, was to receive $10,000 out of the loot for his part. But the messenger maintained his innocence, and authorities had to drop charges for lack of evidence. Fotheringham later sued for false arrest, naming Robert Pinkerton and the Adams Express Company as defendants. Pinkerton's lawyers managed to get him dismissed from the case, but the court awarded Fotheringham $20,000 in damages against the Adams company.

DURING the early 1890s, the number of train robberies increased rapidly in the western states, and the Pinkertons were involved in most of the newsworthy investigations, often voluntarily if the suspects were famous train robbers. In 1892, California authorities launched one of the biggest manhunts in the state's history, trying to apprehend Chris Evans and John Sontag, suspects in a series of holdups on the Southern Pacific. While most of the credit for tracking down the two criminals went to a tireless Southern Pacific special agent named Will Smith, Pinkerton agency files disclose that its operatives initially identified Evans and Sontag as the suspects. Pinkerton operatives also were the first to identify the notorious lone wolf train robber Oliver Curtis Perry, who bedeviled express company messengers on the New York Central Railroad in 1891 and 1892.

Pinkertons were also relentlessly involved in the pursuit of Wild Bunch gang members Butch Cassidy (Robert LeRoy Parker) and the Sundance Kid (Harry Longabaugh), although they were not under direct pressure to capture them—most of the train companies the Wild Bunch hit did not have Pinkerton contracts. However, the Wild Bunch had achieved notoriety, and chasing them meant headlines. The agency assigned one of its top investigators, Frank Dimaio, to the case. He traced Butch and Sundance to Argentina in 1903, allowing the agency to temporarily close its files on them, and earning for himself the general superintendency of the firm's new Pittsburgh division.

Dimaio's promotion was typical. While William and Robert Pinkerton sought favorable publicity for themselves and the agency, they discouraged notoriety for their operatives. When one gained individual attention for his accomplishments, the brothers usually quietly promoted him to a supervisory position.

Successful Pinkerton operatives who preferred to stay in the field usually had to move on to another detective agency,


$1,000 Reward!
WE WILL PAY FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR THE
Arrest and Detention
UNTIL HE CAN BE REACHED, OF
Tom Nixon,
Alias TOM BARNES, five feet seven or eight in. high, 145 to 150 lbs. weight, 25 years of age, blue-gray eyes, light hair and whiskers; beard not heavy or long; mustache older and longer than beard. He is a blacksmith, and worked at that trade in the Black Hills, last summer; has friends in Minnesota and Indiana. He was one of the robbers of the Union Pacific Train, at Big Springs, Nebraska, on September 18, 1877.
He had about $10,000 in $20 Gold pieces of the stolen money in his possession, of the coinage of the San Francisco Mint of 1877. The above reward will be paid for his arrest and detention, and 10 per cent. of all moneys recovered, previous rewards as regards him are withdrawn.
ANY INFORMATION LEADING TO HIS APPREHENSION WILL BE REWARDED Address
ALLAN PINKERTON,
191 and 193 Fifth Avenue CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
Or, E. M. MORSMAN
Supt. U. P. R. R. Express, OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Author's Collection

Pinkerton poster offering a reward for train robber Tom Nixon, a member of the Sam Bass gang, circa 1878

Charles C. Goodhall Collection

Pinkerton operative Tom Horn, posing as a railroad conductor, circa 1892.

Tom Horn worked as a Pinkerton operative in the early 1890s, and according to agency files, Pinkerton officials hired Horn on the basis of his "impeccable credentials" as an army scout and Indian fighter. Apparently he was successful in pursuing train robbers and other criminals in the Rocky Mountain area for nearly four years.

a move sometimes prompted by financial reasons. Unlike many other detective agencies, the Pinkertons' did not allow their operatives to receive rewards for catching criminals. The policy probably resulted from the poor reputations of some Pinkerton competitors, who often used deceptive practices tracking down criminals for profit.

Although the Pinkerton agency was criticized more than once for the aggressiveness of its operatives, it held itself out as setting high standards for employees. The agency's official position was that "the character of the operative must be above reproach and only those of strict moral principles and good habits will be permitted to enter the service."

Of course, some bad ones invariably slipped through. Tom Horn worked as a Pinkerton operative in the early 1890s, and according to agency files, Pinkerton officials hired Horn on the basis of his "impeccable credentials" as an army scout and Indian fighter. Apparently he was successful in pursuing train robbers and other criminals in the Rocky Mountain area for nearly four years, but evidence in the agency's files indicates that law officers arrested him for robbery in Nevada, and that William Pinkerton personally interceded to protect the agency's reputation.

The agency obtained many of its operatives from police and sheriff's departments, which frequently discarded experienced officers when a new political party took control. Also, the agency often hired reformed criminals and dispersed them over the country in the guise of vagabonds and transients, with instructions to mingle with the "low life" and keep their ears open.

By 1900, the Pinkerton agency was a well-oiled operation with offices in major cities coast-to-coast. It conducted most western train robbery investigations out of the Denver office, which had become western division headquarters. The office included a division manager, a superintendent, and four assistant superintendents. A chief clerk handled day-to-day operations and oversaw a bookkeeper, cashier, and four or five stenographers. Thirty operatives, many of them undercover, worked in the field.

As was traditional for police or detective work of any kind, Pinkerton employees earned modest salaries. In the early 1900s, the western division manager got forty-five dollars per week—a somewhat respectable amount for the day. The superintendent drew thirty-five dollars weekly, and assistant superintendents $28.75 each. The chief clerk, bookkeeper, and cashier earned nineteen dollars, eighteen dollars, and sixteen dollars, respectively, and field operatives fifteen dollars per week.

The Denver office charged clients from six dollars to eight dollars per day per operative for investigative or security work. Criminal cases occupied about a sixth of the field force, with the remaining operatives engaged in labor matters.

The new century saw a decline in the Pinkertons' train robbery investigations. Train holdups had peaked about 1895, probably because of a slow economy. As the nation plunged into a recession following the business panic of 1893, sluggish business conditions curtailed the number of express shipments by rail and reduced the amount

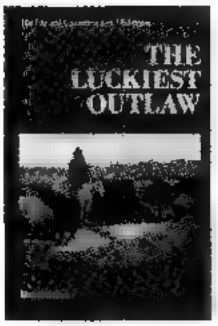
of the average shipment. For the "long-rider," the risk-benefit ratio became less favorable. New faces still appeared in the Pinkertons' file of train robbers, but not as often.

Other events contributed to the decline of train robberies. In 1902 Congress passed the Train Robbery Act, which made it a federal crime to board a train within the jurisdiction of the United States with the intent of robbery or murder. Also, many parts of the West were becoming settled, and outlaws found it more difficult to escape following a holdup. Taking a lead from the Union Pacific line, railroads and law enforcement agencies (including the Pinkertons, in some cases) dispatched lightning-fast trains carrying mounted posses to the scene of a robbery, cutting bandits' escape time considerably.

THE INCIDENCE of holdups fell off so sharply that William Pinkerton, in a speech before the 1907 annual convention of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, described the train robber as an "almost extinct outlaw." He spoke prematurely. At the time, statistics supported Pinkerton's view, but train robberies were in a period of transition. The heyday of the railway express companies was indeed over, as banks and businesses now favored registered mail for shipments of cash—but criminals noticed the change. Soon mail car robberies simply replaced express car robberies.

Within several years of William Pinkerton's comment, attacks on railway mail cars actually increased, but Pinkerton's National Detective Agency had little to do with the robbery investigations. The Railway Mail Service had its own investigators, and under the federal act, United States marshals had jurisdiction in nearly every rail holdup. The services of the Pinkertons were no longer needed. The agency moved further into labor investigations, industrial espionage, and finally, security guard work.

In its day, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency was unique. Although flawed and at times a threat to individual liberties, it served in a limited way as the nation's police force. Some have compared it to the Federal Bureau of Investigation—and Allan Pinkerton to J. Edgar Hoover. Even the agency's critics, and there were many, admitted that when it came to catching train robbers, the Pinkertons were good at their job.



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Horsehead to Castle Gap

TRAILING THE PAST

By PATRICK DEAREN

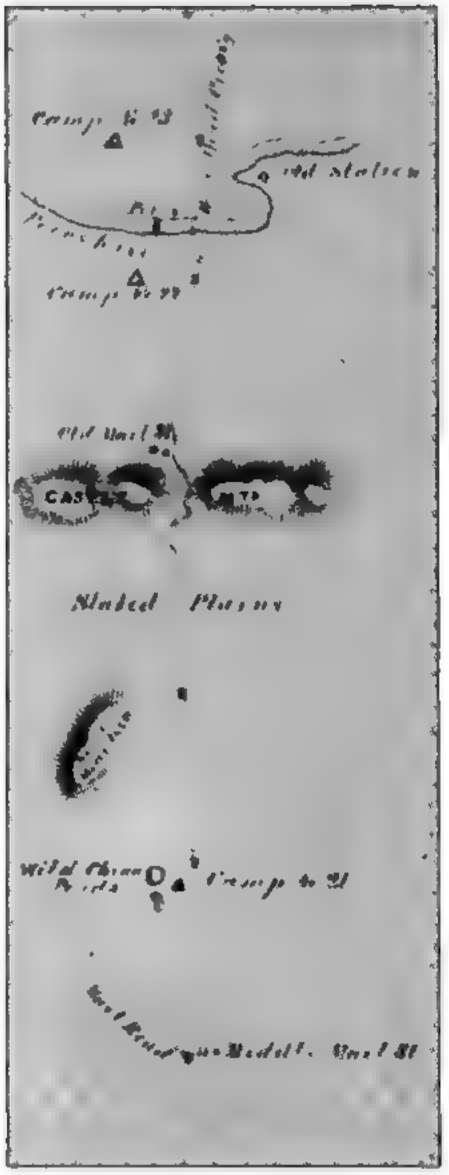
Through scorching sand and rocky defile we trod a 200-year-old trail that Comanche raiders, westbound emigrants, Butterfield stages, and thirst-crazed longhorns had beaten. For seventy-five years this fourteen-mile stretch from Castle Gap to the Pecos River's Horsehead Crossing in West Texas had lain dormant. Subject to sandstorms and erosion, its horse paths and wagon ruts were nearly forgotten, but this trail—known variously as the Comanche War Trail, Southern Overland Route, Butterfield Stage line, and the Goodnight-Loving Trail—was too well branded in the annals of the West ever to die. It evoked classic images of Indian fights, shootouts, and stampedes, but could it bridge the chasm between nineteenth century legends and a high-tech world demanding physical evidence?

Two associates, Richard Galle and Rick Gray, and I decided to find out. We would attempt to locate the actual historic Horsehead Crossing and its approaching wagon road, then trail the latter the full fourteen miles from Horsehead on the west to the plains beyond Castle Gap on the east.

FROM NINE YEARS of preliminary study, I knew our task would not be easy. The desert bends of the Pecos River fifty-five miles southwest of Midland, Texas, had hidden Horsehead Crossing ever since Chon Villalba, born in 1900, had helped push the last herds across in 1928. Although officials placed a Texas Centennial marker in the vicinity in 1936 and subsequently set aside a west-bank plat supposedly encompassing the crossing, knowledge of Horsehead Crossing came mainly from legends. Destructive floods that widened the moat-like river to as much as a mile in 1929 and 1941 altered the banks, and time dimmed the memories of the last surviving people who forded there.

Cora Dawson Smith (1893–1982), who crossed Horsehead by wagon numerous times in the early twentieth century, told me the crossing lay on a *curve* about two miles *downstream* of the historical marker. A member of the pioneering Cowden family, which ranched along the

A sketch originally published in the 1850s in John Russell Bartlett's *Personal Narrative of Explorations*, depicting two wagons crossing Horsehead.



Colonel Thomas B. Hunt's 1869 map showing Horsehead Crossing, the old Butterfield stage stations, the eastbound wagon road, and Castle Gap.

east bank of the river, said the crossing lay a mile *upstream* of the marker. Author J. Evetts Haley, who saw the site in the early 1930s, said the crossing was on a *straightaway* and that, at the time, the cuts in each bank were obvious and had grown up in brush. Tyson Midkiff (1897–1991), who told me of crossing thirty to thirty-five horses at Horsehead in 1918, never returned to the site after the erection of the marker and thus had no frame of reference. He noted, however, that Horsehead was a "big, wide crossing," with as much as one hundred yards of gently sloping banks that allowed for fording.

The testimony of old-time cowboy Gid Reding, who was born in 1900 and crossed Horsehead on horseback in 1924, further complicated the search. "Where I crossed was a rock bottom," he said, "[but] I think the crossing was wherever the last big flood . . . left a place . . . . That river would get up a month at a time and those wagon trains would hang out there and wait for it to get down."

Fortunately, we went to the Horsehead vicinity armed with maps: Colonel Thomas B. Hunt's sketch, made during his 1869 scout of the region, situating the crossing on a straightaway; an 1890 Pecos County survey map (with ill-defined river bends) placing it a short distance above the present marker; and a United States Department of Agriculture high-altitude photograph taken in 1961. The latter, remarkable in detail, plainly shows the historic wagon road approaching the Pecos from Castle Gap to the east-northeast and, within a few hundred yards of the river, branching into four or five ill-defined trails that curve upstream to merge into a single road, from which a side trail veers to the Pecos. On the opposite bank and a little upstream, patterns suggest wagon roads exiting in a "V" pattern.

Driving to the historical marker and wading west-to-east across the river (the knee-deep water rose to my midriff as I sank in the muck with each step), I thought about the horses which long ago plunged into this waterway and gave Horsehead its name. Comanches riding the war trail ("eight beaten paths side by side," a stage passenger described it in 1859) stole the horses in Mexico, then pushed them hard through sixty miles of desert to reach the Pecos, where the animals drank until they died. Their skulls, bleaching on the banks, grotesquely greeted travelers for years.

Gaining the east bank and hiking upstream across sandy turf, we found many campfire mounds, which we distinguished by their discoloration. For 150 years, westbound Indians and pioneers bedded down here upon reaching the first sure water since the head of the Middle Concho, seventy-five miles to the east. But, while the Pecos offered water, the specter of death always lingered. "For one square mile, one could have jumped from one [cattle] carcass to another without touching a foot to the ground," reported John Carlile in 1866.

Three bends above the historical marker, we studied the ground paralleling a northwest-to-southeast river straightaway, and found ourselves hurled into the past. There, surprising in its clarity, lay the wagon road that had carried Butterfield stages, forty-niners, and cattle drive chuckwagons upstream. Walking its ruts, we came upon a deeply etched gully, barely more than wagon-wide, veering off at a right angle for the Pecos.

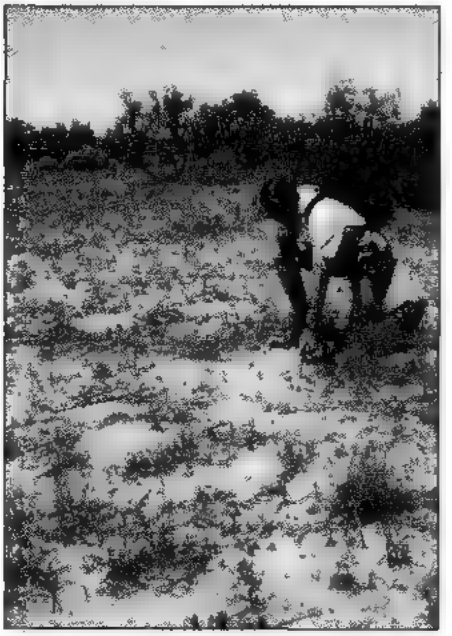
As we descended, the walls crowded close and I remembered a description by Cliff Newland, who crossed 10,000 sheep on wagon beds tied end-to-end in 1904. "The bank was just . . . straight up, and they had a place cut down in there just wide enough [for] wagons [to] go down. If you drove down in there,

Author's Photo

Artifacts the author's party found on the trail from Horsehead Crossing through Castle Gap.

Left: Rick Gray surveys Horsehead Crossing from the east bank.

Below: Richard Galle inspects old campfire mounds at the site of the Butterfield stage stand at Horsehead.



Both Author's Photos

you couldn't back up; there wasn't room enough to bring your team between the wagon and the bank." But we had no intentions of turning back, and within moments we stood at a place hidden for decades—Horsehead Crossing.

I stood at the water's edge and looked across and a little upstream at the much broader cut in the opposite bank and thought about Charles Goodnight's and Oliver Loving's first herd on the Goodnight-Loving Trail. The herd had endured three days and nights without water since leaving the Middle Concho, and upon reaching the crossing the leading two-thirds of the thirst-crazed longhorns stampeded blindly into the currents.

"Those behind pushed the ones in the lead right on across before they had time to stop and drink," Goodnight recalled. "I was in the lead and as soon as they all cleared the river, I turned them back and they readily went in again, drinking as they swam back. They crossed in such volume and force that they impeded the current, and the water was halfway up the bank in a perfect flood."

I studied the east bank, which walled the Pecos downstream of the crossing, and remembered the fate of the 500 "drags" which Goodnight and Loving later drove to the river. "They were virtually crazy and would go either to the water or not at all," Goodnight recounted. "All hands on one side could not turn them. The point of the river for which they were headed was like a ditch, with banks from six to ten feet high. When they reached the river they never halted, but poured right over the bank and the remainder of the horses went with them." When Goodnight and Loving finally pointed their herd north two days later, they left over one hundred steers hopelessly mired in the quicksands of the Pecos. All the misfortunes led Goodnight to curse the river as "the graveyard of the cowman's hopes."

The river could also give life. On the west bank in 1855, Comanches pushing stolen horses into the river momentarily forgot two young horsemen they had captured in Mexico. The boys, ages eight and ten, slipped off their mounts during the excitement and escaped; a wagon train later rescued them.

The damp sand clinging to my boots reminded me of the 1865 catastrophe which befell the work oxen of a 123-family wagon train that already had lost its cattle herd to Comanches in Castle Gap. "The hindmost crowd[ed] the foremost into the treacherous quicksands," recorded R.J. Newton, "and only nineteen steers, and nine and a half yoke, out of one hundred twenty yoke were saved. Two hundred and twenty-one of our oxen died in the Pecos."

However, the river could also *give* life. On the west bank in 1855, Comanches pushing stolen horses into the river momentarily forgot two young horsemen they had captured in Mexico. The boys, ages eight and ten, slipped off their mounts during the excitement and escaped; a wagon train subsequently rescued them.

I could hear in my mind the creak of wheels as the first westbound Butterfield Overland Mail stage halted at this very spot in the pre-dawn blackness of September 26, 1858, and sought the relay camp. "After hallooing and blowing our horn," recorded passenger Waterman L. Ormsby, "we obtained an answer, as we supposed, from the other side of the river, telling us to drive up stream, which advice we followed, when to our astonishment we found ourselves in camp on the same side of the river. The fact is, the Pecos makes such a turn here that you can hardly tell which side you are on."

As we turned to climb the bank and proceed around that 135-degree bend, we noted three other significant cuts—one downstream and two upstream—

which likely led wagons or ferryboats to the water's edge. The stage station, built after Ormsby's trip, consisted of an adobe building and corrals. Although we searched a flat where Hunt's 1869 map pinpointed the stand, we found only campfire mounds, pieces of broken pottery and dishes, and unidentifiable slivers of badly rusted metal.

Nevertheless, drama still seemed to hover over this place, as it had in 1867 for cattle drover Joel D. Hoy, his family, and cowboys already weary from driving 1,014 beeves for nine days. At Horsehead Crossing, 150 Indians attacked, dividing the herd and remuda and driving the animals across the river. Although Mrs. Hoy suffered a wound to her thigh, she continued loading guns and tending to three wounded cowboys until she finally collapsed. When the Indians temporarily fell back, Hoy and the able men desperately pushed and pulled a wagon bearing the wounded upstream and took shelter in the abandoned stage stand.

The flat about it, even today, drops off steeply into the river, and in those then-deadly waters, one of the cowhands drowned in an escape attempt. At the same time, Ben Gooch and the cowboys of a second herd reached the crossing only to become similar seige victims. For two days Indians beleaguered the two parties before withdrawing in the face of a one-hundred-man prospecting party under Jacob Schnively and Colonel William Dalrymple.

Turning to the east-northeast, we sighted the cleft of Castle Gap in the Castle Mountains. In 1684 Spanish explorer Mendoza had done the same, penning the first recorded description of the now-legendary pass. He wrote, "On the other side of the river, toward the east, about four leagues apparently [in reality, twelve miles], there is a little range of mountains; from it extends a small mesa; above this rises another little mesa which commands a wide prospect."

FOR CENTURIES Castle Gap was the eastern gateway to and from the Pecos for Indians seeking either salt at nearby Juan Cordona Lake, or buffalo herds which generally ranged only east of the river. The animals occasionally used the gap, as one early traveler witnessed when such a herd delayed his stage at the canyon.

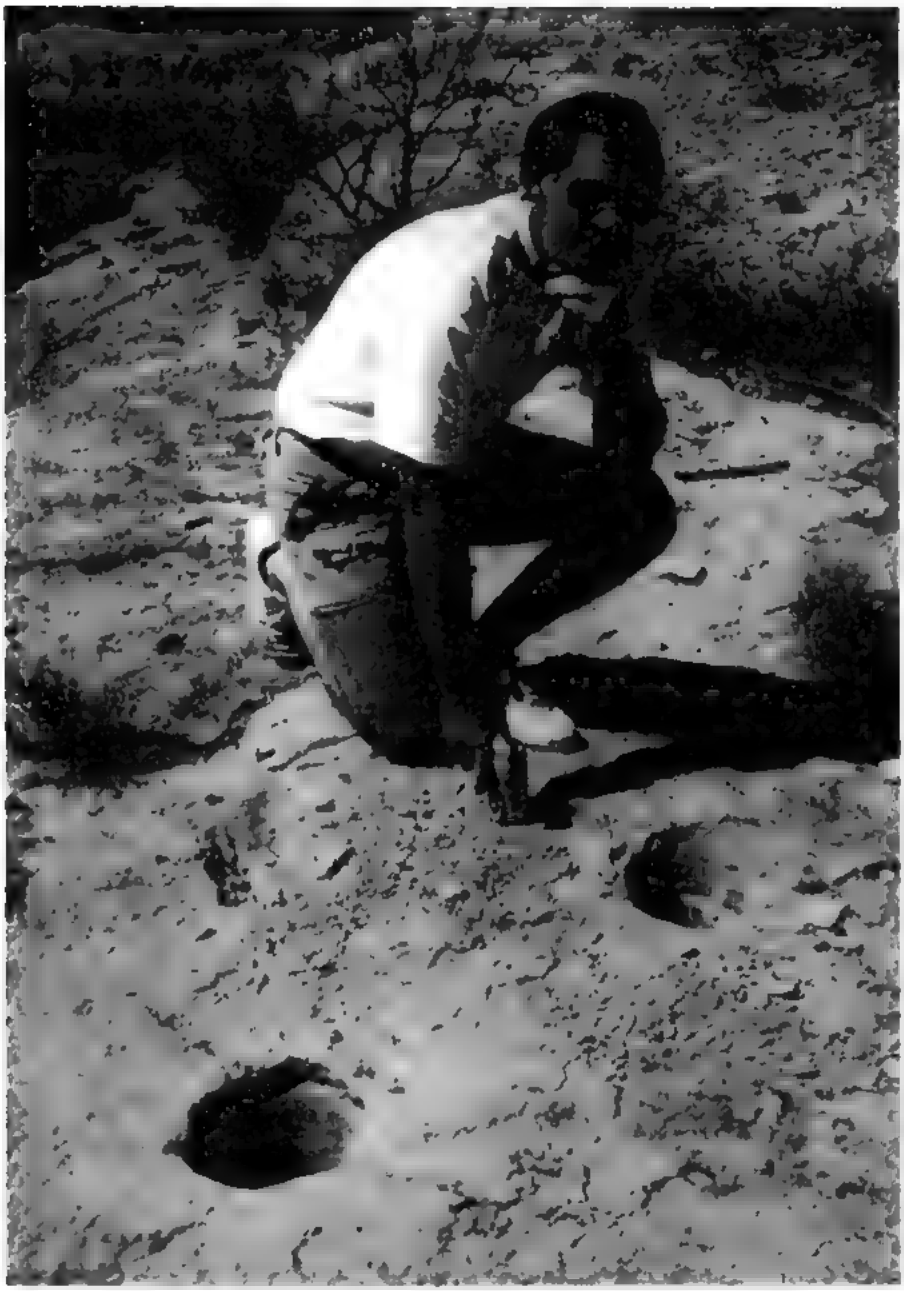
Setting a course toward the gap, we took out cross-country in search of the trail. Leaving Horsehead behind, we continued to find old, bluish-gray campfire mounds, yet found no evidence of a cemetery Charles Goodnight noted here in the 1870s—thirteen graves, twelve the result of gunfights. Indeed, Horsehead and the Pecos grew so notorious for outlaws that the very name of the river entered the western vernacular as a verb: to "pecos" a man was to kill him and roll his body over the bank of the Pecos.

Entering the near-desert on foot, I thought about cattle drover John Chisum's unfortunate cowhands back in 1872. As they pushed a herd of 4,000 steers along the Goodnight-Loving Trail, Indians stole all but four of their horses. Fearing another attack, the cowboys could do nothing but drive the cattle by foot for fifteen grueling days before finally reaching Bosque Grande, New Mexico.

Within a few hundred yards of the crossing, we found the Horsehead-to-Castle Gap wagon road, distinguishable by a better growth of grass (and sometimes mesquites) in its linear depression. As I hiked alongside, something foreign to the sand caught

Author's Photo

The pass of Castle Gap.



Author's Photo

Richard Golle amid Indian grinding basins in Castle Gap.

my eye. Kneeling, I found a .45 caliber long Colt bullet minus the shell casing. I couldn't help but wonder what story of desperation and bloodshed it might hold—a story now lost forever.

The day wore on, and the trail remained distinct as it led us straight toward Castle Gap through the same wasteland that stage passenger Albert Richardson described in 1859 as "a shoreless ocean of desolation." Though occasional oil tanks reminded us that we were still in the twentieth century, we continued finding artifacts such as projectile points, a bone button, a rusted belt buckle, a woman's ring, and broken dishes, that suggested an era of marauding Comanches and stalwart pioneers.

Although in 1849 Brevet First Lieutenant Francis T. Bryan found this road passing through "an exceedingly barren country, sandy, and producing scarcely anything but prickly pear," about five miles from the river we struck an immense mesquite thicket which obliterated the trail. As the cresting sun dried our throats and baked our skulls, we searched diligently, to no avail. The ruts now hopelessly lost as we left the mesquites behind, we could only forge on, through sand that burned our eyes and grasped at our boots, for Castle Gap. The lower Pecos country, as Captain William Henry Chase Whiting said in 1849, was a land "with the curse of thirst upon it," and I gained an entirely new appreciation for the ordeals both man and animals had suffered here.

Along this very stretch fell thousands of thirst-weakened cattle, never to rise. Goodnight and Loving alone, in their first drive, lost 300 steers before reaching the Pecos. Like the skulls at Horsehead, the carcasses lay mutely watching history and drama push westward. "Road from Canyon to river, heavy sandy plain, full of dead cattle," observed Colonel Thomas B. Hunt in 1869.

This arid stretch proved just as demanding on man, as Indian depredations sometimes forced emigrants to walk the sands just to survive. "Before we reached that stream [the Pecos] the Indians slipped in and stole all our horses," recounted one pioneer woman. "We were driving a number of loose cattle in order to have fresh oxen in case our teams gave out. The poor men were compelled to trudge through the deep scorching sand on foot and drive the cattle."

As the brush thickened and our water dwindled, we crossed US Highway 385 and closed in on Castle Gap, where legend holds that six or more lost treasures lie. The most famous legend involves Mexican Emperor Maximilian, who found his reign crumbling in 1867 and supposedly sent his inheritance northeastward, via Castle Gap, for an awaiting ship.

NUMEROUS stories about the Maximilian treasure confound historians. One story maintains that, west of the Pecos, former Confederate soldiers hired on as guards for the wagon train. At a camp near the river they learned the cargo was treasure rather than agricultural produce. Between Horsehead Crossing and the plains east of Castle Gap, the ex-soldiers massacred the caravan members, cached the treasure, and made plans to return for it. Riding east, they battled adversaries and the lone survivor made his way on to North Texas or Oklahoma where he wound up in a jail or asylum. On his deathbed he told of the massacre and detailed the treasure's location. The name "Black" often surfaces in the story, either as one of the outlaws, the captain of some Texas Rangers who battled them, a doctor who tended the dying man, or an early treasure hunter.

The possibility that Maximilian's treasure might be cached in one of Castle Gap's shallow caves took our minds off the fact that we now were out of water and still faced almost three miles of rugged canyon. As we reached the always-windy western edge of the gap,

we looked for signs of the old spring and stage stand. Hunt's 1869 map showed the stand consisted of two buildings (one probably a barn) immediately south of the road. In a taped interview, C.C. Childress described the scene as it appeared in 1887. "The water came off the north side of the hill and ran down into a big old water trough. . . . We watered our horses there at the stand. There was a house standing there and [someone] was using it. It was made out of dirt and little chunk rocks." But even though we combed the area thoroughly, time, erosion, and treasure hunters had erased any evidence of either stand or spring.

AS WE ENTERED the 421-foot-deep gap, formed by Castle Mountain on the north and King Mountain on the south, we came upon traces of wagon ruts for the first time in seven miles. Then the road seemed to fall away into the deep gully which cuts the gap from east to west—precisely as Cora Smith had described. The heavy erosion evidently occurred sometime before 1926, for in driving a cattle herd through that year, Billy Rankin had to follow a parallel route well up Castle Mountain's slope on the north.

No signs remained in the rocky turf of the horse paths of the Comanche War Trail, which for almost a hundred years carried Comanches, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Rocky Mountain Utahs to rapine and bloodshed in Mexico. But evidence of earlier, permanent Indian habitation lay on either side in the form of three sets of grinding basins, a thick layer of campfire-spawned charcoal in the arroyo bank, smoke-blackened cave roofs, and projectile points glinting in the fire rings of old camps.

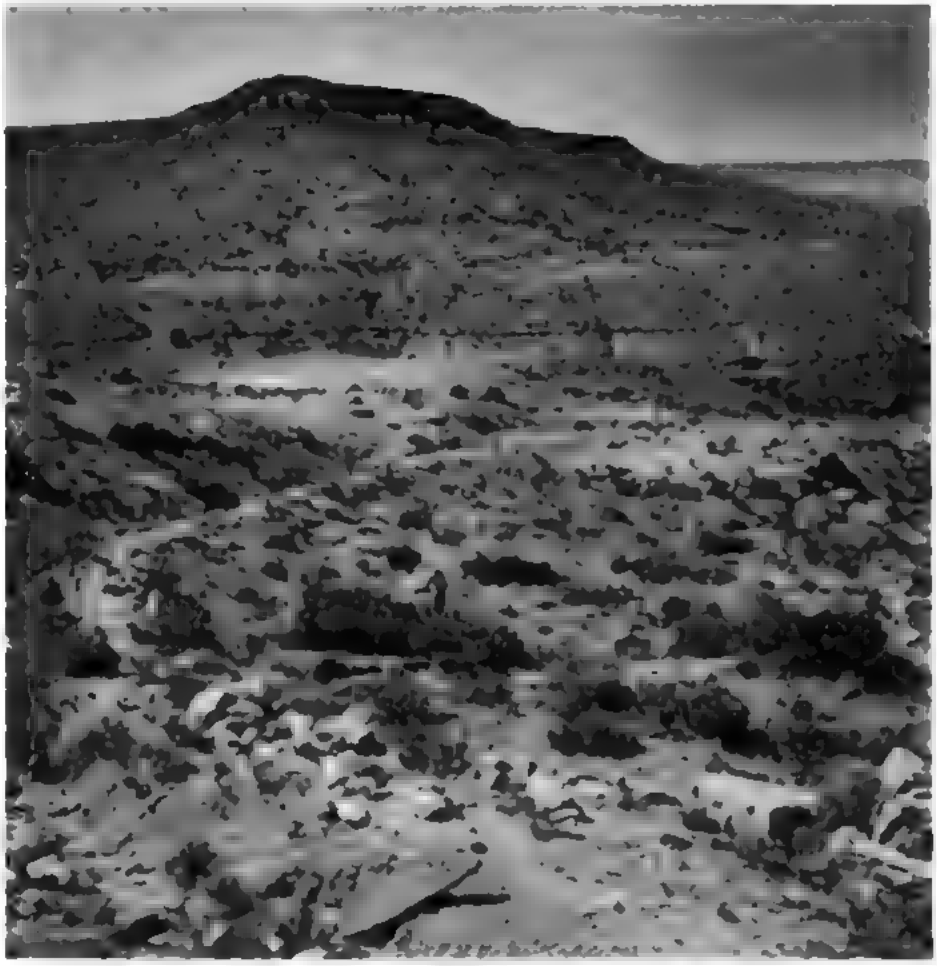
As the canyon walls narrowed, squeezing the gap to only a few yards wide, I looked up at the overhanging bluffs and understood why so many ambushes took place here. In 1867, for example, Comanches swooped down from the tiers of the mountains and drove away cattle boss Lew Soyer's entire herd. Two years later, three Tankersly Ranch cowhands who had safely driven a herd up the Goodnight-Loving Trail met with even greater misfortune on the return trip to the Middle Concho; in Castle Gap, Indians killed two of them. Even as late as 1890, *bandidos* killed cowboy Will Landrum in or near the gap.

But even without the threat of Indians or outlaws, Castle Gap proved treacherous, as Goodnight and Loving learned during their first cattle drive in 1866. Driven day and night for three days since last watering on the Middle Concho, the beeves smelled water and stampeded wildly through the pitch black of Castle Gap. Only by making a daring and reckless ride through the dark did Goodnight chase down the leaders and save the herd.

A herd of 1,000 steers in 1872 did not fare as well. Crazed by a drizzling rain in the gap, the animals would only bawl and mill about. Two frustrating days later, the cowboys abandoned the cattle in order to save themselves.

Eight grueling hours after we left the Pecos, Castle Gap's east side finally yawned open to the plains, stretching toward the distant Middle Concho. By now, exhaustion waged war with our wills and darkness crept at our heels. Ahead, just beyond our awaiting vehicle, the obvious ruts of the old road pushed eastward through shadowy mesquite shrubs. Behind lay fourteen miles of fascinating history encompassing the lives of thousands whose deeds are forgotten. Yet, in a small measure, we had gained unique insight into their character, for this dramatic and unyielding old trail had given us a common frame of reference that bridged the centuries. We now knew them for what they were: iron-willed men and women who with sheer fortitude hewed civilization out of the raw wilderness that was the Old West.

Between Horsehead Crossing and the plains east of Castle Gap, the ex-soldiers massacred the caravan members, cached the treasure, and made plans to return for it. Riding east, they battled adversaries and the lone survivor went to North Texas or Oklahoma where he wound up in a jail or asylum.

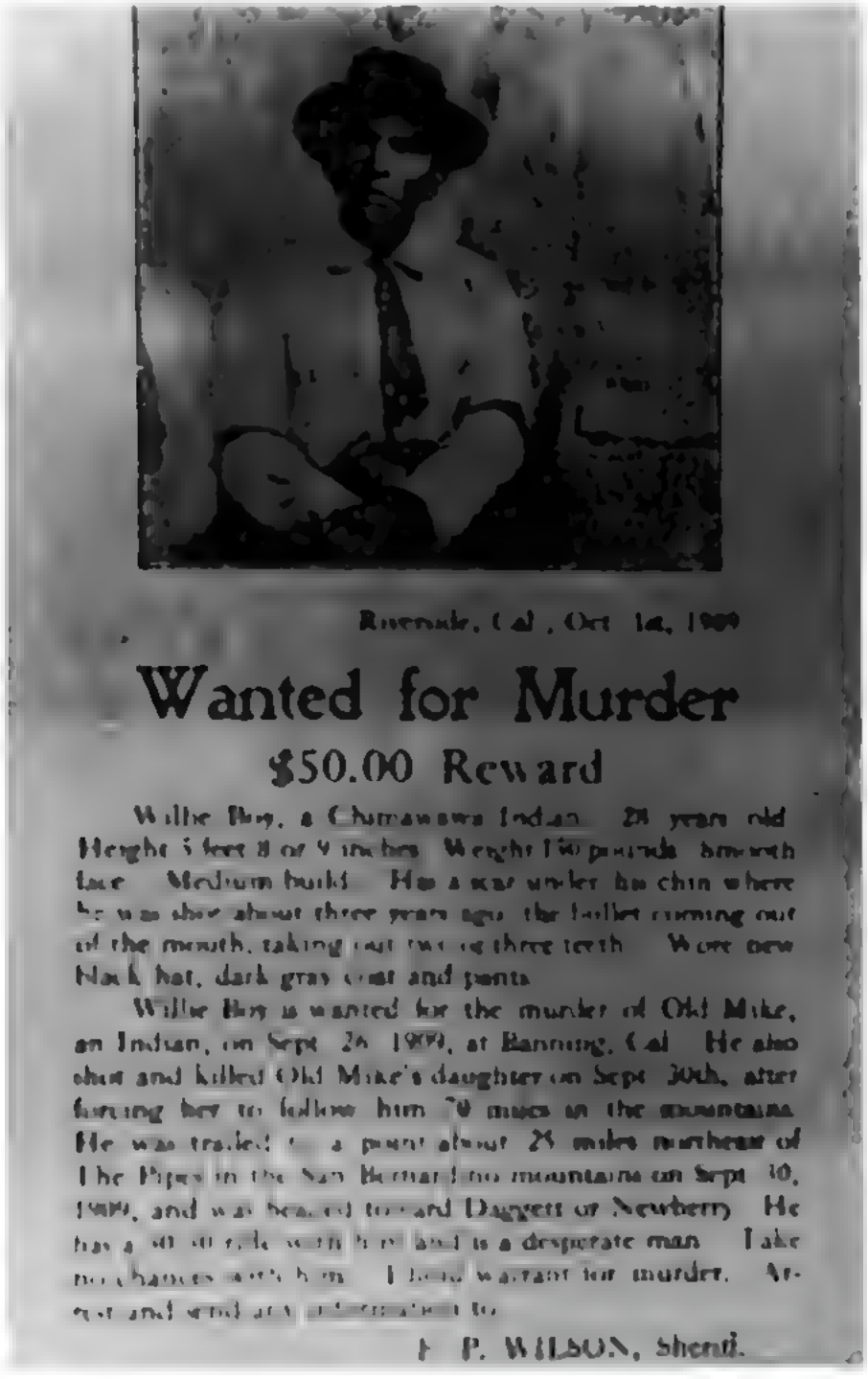


Author's Photo

Castle Gap from the upper slopes of Castle Mountain.

The Manhunt for Willie Boy

By HAROLD L. EDWARDS



Riverside, Cal., Oct 1st, 1909

Wanted for Murder

$50.00 Reward

Willie Boy, a Chemehuevis Indian 28 years old Height 5 feet 8 or 9 inches Weight 150 pounds brown face Medium build Has a scar under his chin where he was shot about three years ago the bullet coming out of the mouth, taking out two or three teeth Wore new black hat, dark gray coat and pants

Willie Boy is wanted for the murder of Old Mike, an Indian, on Sept 26 1909, at Banning, Cal He also shot and killed Old Mike's daughter on Sept 30th, after forcing her to follow him 70 miles in the mountains He was tracked to a point about 25 miles northeast of The Pipes in the San Bernardino mountains on Sept 30, 1909, and was headed toward Daggett or Newberry He has a lot of rifle with him and is a desperate man Take no chances with him I have warrant for murder. Arrest and send any information to

J. P. WILSON, Sheriff.

William Secrest Photo

Willie Boy, a Paiute Indian, was worth fifty dollars upon his capture for murder in Riverside, California, in 1909.

Willie Boy wasn't well-known or taken seriously in the Riverside-San Bernardino area of California before September 1909. White residents considered him just another illiterate Paiute Indian and an itinerant farm laborer. Among the local Indians he had a reputation as a lady's man, and he had had one brush with the law when San Bernardino authorities arrested him for public drunkeness in 1906.

Willie Boy was born in California in 1881 and may have had familial ties with the Chemehuevis branch, as locals believed. His parents died during his youth, perhaps by drowning as Indian stories later said. By 1900 the nineteen-year-old orphan lived with his sister, Georgia Brown, her husband, George, and their two children in Victorville. However, Willie Boy became famous when he shot and killed "Old Mike" Bonifacio while the seventy-four-year-old man was asleep. Both whites and Indians liked Old Mike and his family, and both communities found his brutal murder outrageous.

Willie Boy had known the Bonifacios for years. They had lived near each other in Victorville, Twenty Nine Palms, and on the Morongo Mission Indian Reservation near Banning. They had worked together many times, and in 1909 Willie Boy became infatuated with Old Mike's fourteen-year-old daughter, Nita. Early in the year Willie Boy took her from her parents without their permission and fled into the nearby mountains. Old Mike and several of his sons tracked Willie down and reclaimed Nita at rifle-point, but the matter did not end. Later, Willie Boy asked Old Mike for permission to marry Nita, and Old Mike made it clear to Willie Boy that the Bonifacios no longer welcomed him in their home. But Willie Boy was still determined to have Nita for his own.

During September 1909, Old Mike and his family worked the harvest on the Arthur Gillman ranch near Banning. Due to the summer heat, they camped

in the open near Gillman's orchard. On the night of September 27, Willie Boy burglarized Gillman's home and took a .30-30 Winchester rifle and about twenty rounds of ammunition. He crept up to the Bonifacio camp and, while the family slept, shot Old Mike through the left eye, killing him instantly. Willie Boy threatened the shocked and terrified Bonifacio family with death if they did not let Nita leave with him. Fearful for her remaining children and powerless to prevent Nita's abduction, Mary Bonifacio told her daughter to leave with the killer. Willie Boy and Nita disappeared into the desert darkness.

Willie Boy was not prepared for his trek. He had no horse, food, or water, and Nita had no shoes. He did have the rifle and ammunition, and he had a good start on any pursuers. Curiously, the Bonifacio family did not report the murder and abduction to Constable Ben DeCrevecoeur in Banning until late the next morning.

UPON LEARNING of the incident, DeCrevecoeur notified Riverside County Sheriff Frank Wilson of the crimes and said he was leaving Banning with a horseback posse of four men. Wilson and Riverside County Coroner C.S. Dickinson drove to Banning. There the coroner took charge of Old Mike's remains and Wilson organized a posse of four lawmen and ten civilians.

While Wilson's posse rode hard to overtake DeCrevecoeur's men, Willie Boy made his way up Morongo Canyon, and the sheriff found the constable's group about to follow that route. The posses hesitated long enough for the leaders to discuss strategy. They knew that Willie and Nita were heading north into the higher, almost inaccessible mountains of San Bernardino County. However, Sheriff Wilson thought the fugitive would circle back south out of the mountains to Palm Springs where he could get mounts, then ride for Mexico. Others thought he would turn eastward for the Colorado River country and seek help from the Chemehuevi Indians there. From that point the fugitive could easily ride south into Mexico, east into the Arizona desert, or even north through Death Valley into Nevada, where he had friends and relatives. However, DeCrevecoeur thought Willie Boy would first try to reach Twenty Nine Palms, where he had close relatives who could help him.

In any event, the officers knew they were in for a rough time. Willie Boy knew the country and where to get horses and water. The lawmen had to act fast, and riders went to various isolated ranches and water holes to prevent the outlaw from using them. Several others rode to Twenty Nine Palms to patrol that area. Hopefully they had acted fast enough to catch Willie Boy.

John Boessenecker Photo

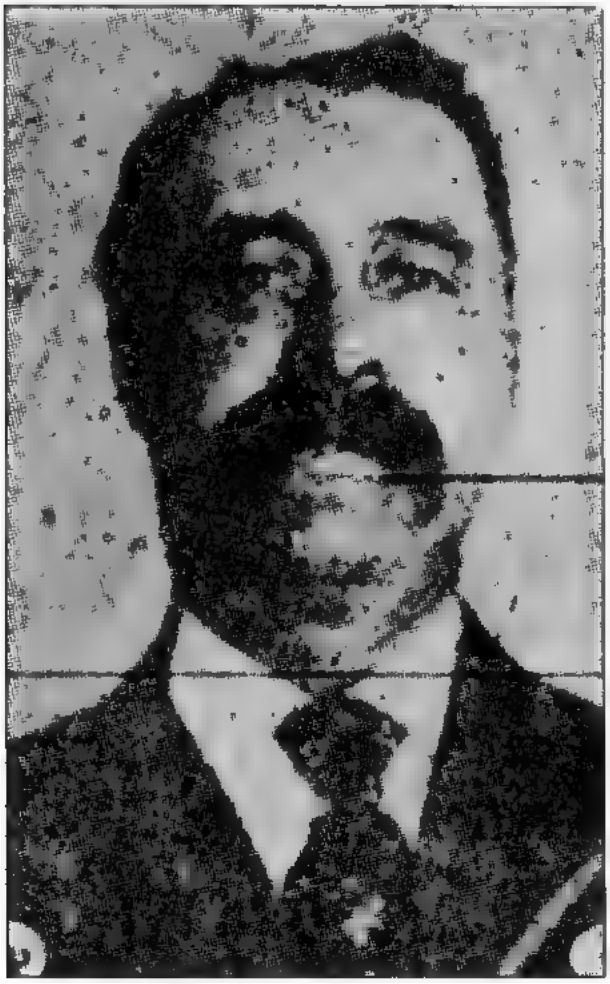
Banning Constable Ben DeCrevecoeur takes a moment from his arduous manhunt for Willie Boy to pose for a picture.

In the meantime, Willie Boy had already entered a cabin on a hill just above White Water and stole pans, bacon, beans, and flour. He also got water. He still had no horse, but his progress was rapid. Sometime on September 29 he and Nita walked out of the upper reaches of Big Morongo Canyon north of White Water. Near there a couple of possemen thought they could hear Nita crying, but rough terrain prevented them getting a glimpse of the fugitive.

Riverside County, through Sheriff Wilson, offered a fifty dollar reward for Willie Boy. However, other than the citizens on the posse, civilians took no part in the manhunt and the fifty dollars did not interest reward seekers. The search for Willie Boy remained with lawmen, who did the best they could under the circumstances.

Fifty-five miles northeast of Banning, Wilson and his men turned back to town to remount and resupply. To keep the fugitive from resting, Ben Decrevecoeur, his brother Wall, J.N. Lovern, Joe Toutaine, Charles Reche, and Indian trackers Segundo Chino and Henry

California State Library



John Boessencker Photo

Left: Riverside County Sheriff Frank Wilson failed to apprehend Willie Boy. Right: Riverside County Deputy Sheriff Charles Reche was seriously wounded on October 6, 1909.

Pablo pressed onward with tired horses.

When Wilson reached Banning, local Indians told him that soon Willie Boy would kill his captive and then commit suicide, prompting lawmen to believe they had to capture Willie Boy to save Nita. The fugitive's tracks had told them that Nita was weakening. She could not keep up with Willie Boy and at times he half carried her; at other times he dragged her.

In the wilds, Nita finally could go no farther. Willie Boy knew he could not evade the posse if he remained with her, and the officers would easily overtake him if he took her on. Determined that the girl would not return to her family, Willie Boy shot her dead while she was looking away. The bullet entered her back and killed her instantly. Leaving Nita's body where it fell, Willie turned eastward toward Twenty Nine Palms.

About 8:30 a.m. September 30, DeCrevecoeur's men discovered Nita's body. The girl was scratched and torn, and her feet were in deplorable condition; Willie Boy had also brutally beaten her. The possemen felt heavily their failure to rescue her, but they also realized that Willie Boy was now unencumbered and could travel fast. With another murder to his credit, he would be even more desperate and the posse thought they needed more men. Tired, their horses jaded and supplies exhausted, the possemen turned back to Banning with Nita's body.

Ben DeCrevecoeur and the rest of the men who discovered Nita's body were determined to catch Willie Boy. Rested, resupplied, and remounted, DeCrevecoeur and his companions rode from Banning into the mountains to resume the manhunt.

In the meantime, lawmen dispatched word of events to San Bernardino County Sheriff John Ralphs, as the fugitive was now in his county. Ralphs laid out a triangular search area, between Banning and Daggett to the north and Twenty Nine Palms to the east, then organized two posses. He headed one, which went by rail from San Bernardino to Daggett, then by horse southeast into the Mojave Desert. The second posse, under Deputy Sheriff Antonio Percaico, rode into the desert from Victorville.

Newspapers picked up the story of the manhunt and reported it throughout the state, often inaccurately. One announced that an uncle and two aunts of Willie Boy's left Twenty Nine Palms with a horse and wagon load of supplies for the fugitive. As it turned out, Willie Boy's relatives and the other Indians of Twenty Nine Palms were afraid of the outlaw and were actually on their way to the safety of the Morongo Mission Indian Reservation near Banning.

The press also reported that Willie's cousin, Long Boy, of Nevada, was mounted, armed, and supplied and riding to find Willie Boy and help him escape. The report was based on fact. Officers near Daggett intercepted Long Boy October 5, and found him mounted and armed. He admitted he was going to the desert to find Willie Boy, but insisted the fugitive was dead. The lawmen held on to Long Boy.

Another report indicated that Old Mike's stepson, Billie Mike, was mounted, armed, and riding into the

search area from Coachella, southeast of Palm Springs. Out of revenge for the brutal murder of his stepfather, Billie Mike intended to kill Willie Boy. The report proved false; however, it and the others fed the public's interest and made for exciting reading.

After shooting Nita, Willie Boy walked to Twenty Nine Palms, where he found the camp abandoned. Before he could rest, he observed four horsemen approaching. Unseen, Willie Boy retreated into the desert and left Twenty Nine Palms. Possemen there located his tracks, and reported that the fugitive was still nearby.

As Willie trudged westward, DeCrevecoeur's posse searched for him around Bullion Mountain north of Banning. At last, Ben DeCrevecoeur returned to Banning to reoutfit. He left Wall, Riverside County Undersheriff Wallace Evans, Joe Nowlin, Deputy Sheriff Charles Reche, and Joe Toutaine with Indian tracker John Hyde in a base camp at the foot of Bullion Mountain. Chino also remained behind.

About noon, October 6, 1909, Hyde was leading Wall DeCrevecoeur, Nowlin, Reche, and Chino up a ravine on Bullion Mountain. Suddenly he observed Willie Boy's tracks in the dirt. Hyde dismounted and waited for the others to ride up. When they arrived, DeCrevecoeur, Nowlin, and Chino dismounted to consult with Hyde, who told them Willie Boy was not far ahead. Just then Willie Boy opened fire on the possemen from the rocks above, drilling Reche through the hip before he could dismount and knocking him to the ground. As the others dived for cover, Willie Boy shot and killed four of their five horses. He made no move to shoot the last animal, nor did he fire at Reche who was lying on the ground in open view.

The lawmen returned Willie's fire, but had a difficult time locating him, as he used smokeless powder cartridges which left no tell-tale sign of his whereabouts. The outlaw had the officers pinned-down and they could not aid Reche, who spent an agonizing afternoon under the hot sun.

Shortly after sunset, Hyde darted from his shelter and into the covering darkness. He made it on foot to the base camp, where he informed Evans and Toutaine of the battle. They left for the battle site, taking their only horse to transport Reche; Hyde walked on to Banning for help.

Wall DeCrevecoeur and the others started down the mountain, but heard a shot and thought Willie Boy was still shooting at them. Soon they met Evans and Toutaine coming up, and after dark they reclaimed the remaining horse, got Reche aboard the mount, and retreated from the battle site.

Author's Collection

Hard-riding San Bernardino County Sheriff John Ralphs mounted three posses in the search for Willie Boy, but failed to apprehend the outlaw.

They returned Reche to the base camp and made him as comfortable as possible. The possemen remained in camp and waited for help from Banning.

John Hyde finally made it to Banning, and a relief party left immediately for the base camp. They arrived there the following day and saw that Reche was in bad condition; indeed, all of the manhunters were exhausted and in poor shape. The men retreated out of the mountains to a railroad depot at White Water, where Dr. W.D. Mills waited to give Reche immediate aid. They rode the train into Banning, but Dr. Mills accompanied Reche into Los Angeles, where he was hospitalized. Reche eventually recovered.

In the meantime, Long Boy told his jailers that Bullion Mountain was Willie Boy's hoodoo. His parents had drowned there in a cloudburst, Old Mike and his sons had found Willie Boy and Nita there after the first abduction, and Willie Boy had killed Nita there. Curiously, Long Boy said Willie Boy had already died there, even though lawmen still had not determined Willie Boy's situation. At the same time the Banning Indians were telling lawmen that Willie Boy was already dead. Perhaps they all assumed his suicide would be natural, as his culture had not prepared him for a death sentence or life imprisonment.

Officers were by no means certain that the outlaw was dead and mounted another assault on the area. By October 13, Sheriff Ralphs, Sheriff Wilson, and Constable Ben DeCrevecoeur were all heading forces in the field. The posses planned to circle areas around Bullion Mountain, check for tracks leading away from there and, if they found none, close inward to the place possemen had last seen Willie Boy.

The press treated the public to further alarms, reporting that local Indians, with help from Chemehuevis Indians of the Colorado River and Nevada Paiutes, planned an outbreak against the white populace. Press stories further reported that seventeen armed Paiutes had left other California reservations to help the insurgents. Some miners, just out of the mountains, reported they had heard shooting in the wilds. The stories spurred locals to ask Washington, D.C., for help. Of course the stories were nonsense, but kept the public interested in the Willie Boy story.

Finally, on October 15, 1909, Ben DeCrevecoeur and his posse approached the site of the October 6 gunfight. Suddenly DeCrevecoeur spotted Willie Boy lying behind a boulder and fired a quick shot at the outlaw. Willie Boy did not move. With their guns at the ready the lawmen moved in. They found the fugitive dead, obviously by his own hand; the shot that ended his life was the shot the possemen heard the night they retreated from the mountain.

Willie Boy, his location known and out of food, water, and ammunition, had nowhere to go. He removed one of his shoes, pressed his rifle barrel against his chest, and triggered the weapon with his toe. The shot killed him instantly.

The officers fired a number of shots in the air, signalling other posses to come in to them. They considered Willie Boy's body in no condition for transport to Banning, and decided to cremate it on the spot. They piled brush high over the body and set it afire. After the cremation the lawmen rode home and made their reports. The manhunt for Willie Boy was over.

TO UNZ.ORG

Fred roped his first contest steer at Vinita, Oklahoma, in 1909 and won the event. He rode Old Blue, his first steer horse. Later that year he secured a steer on Old Blue in sixteen seconds flat—the fastest time of his life. Fred Lowry won just about every steer roping event he entered in Oklahoma.

FRED LOWRY

Six-time World's Champion

By WILLARD H. PORTER

June 23, 1946, was a big day at the Osage County Fairgrounds in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. Rodeo fans by the score—especially those with a bent for roping and tripping steers rodeo style—gathered to see what might be called a "double-header."

The number one feature was a steer roping jackpot contested on a single steer by the top twenty ropers in the business. Feature number two was a one-on-one match between Jim Snively, a noted rodeoer and rancher from Pawhuska, and Fred Lowry, rodeoer and rancher from Lenapah, Oklahoma. Fans wagered enthusiastically, for in those days betting on one's favorite roper was all part of the sport. *The Oklahoma Roundup* of July 1946 said, "Many side bets were made and some seemed to think that 'Old Man' Lowry, who lowered the world record in steer roping at Cheyenne, Wyoming, in 1916, had lost his stroke."

Still, a significant amount of the "smart money" went on Lowry. His advocates recalled not only that 1916 win at the Cheyenne Frontier Days, but also Lowry's five other steer victories at old Cheyenne in 1921, 1924, 1925, 1927, and 1929, and his calf-snagging victory there in 1921. As talented as Snively was, Lowry's people kept telling themselves, he had never ap-

Fred Lowry of Lenapah, Oklahoma, made a lasting contribution to the game of rodeo roping and is credited with starting the first roping school at his ranch in the 1920s and '30s.

National Cowboy Hall of Fame

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Paper, $15.95

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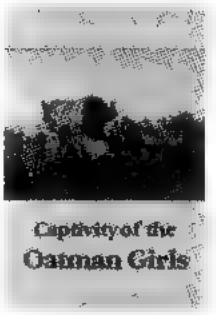

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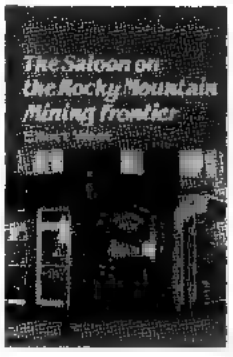

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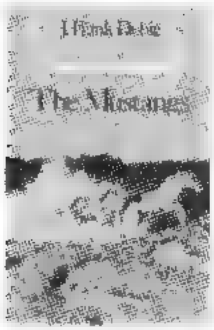

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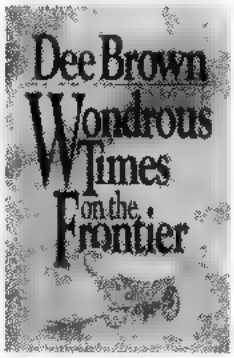

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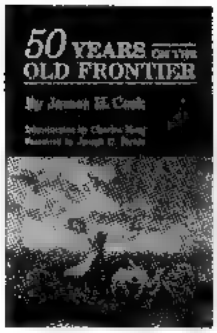

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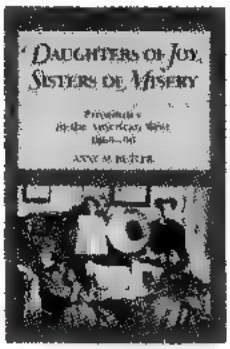

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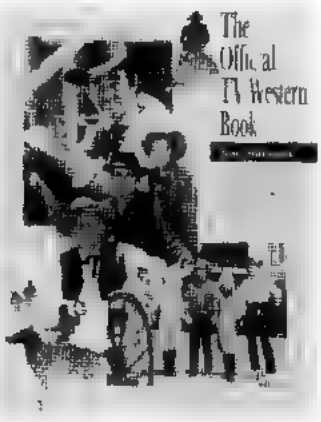

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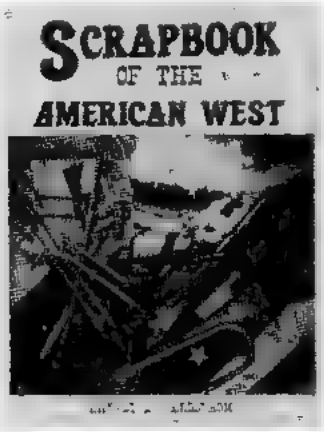

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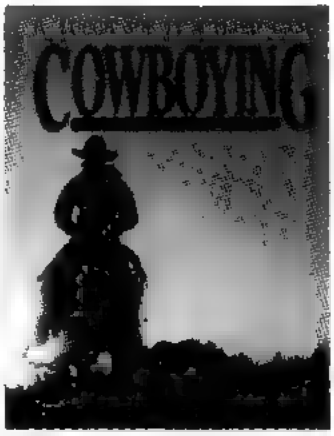

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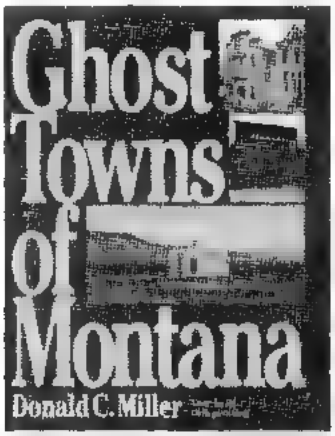

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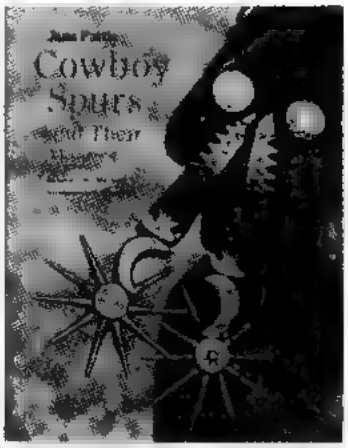

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National Cowboy Hall of Fame

Fred knew and used good horses. Here he is at the Dewey Roundup, mounted on a horse that looks as if it could get the job done.

and judge a cow brute. He also learned what made the difference between a good horse and a bad one. That knowledge helped him as a rodeo roper, and later as a rodeo instructor.

Fred roped his first contest steer at Vinita, Oklahoma, in 1909 and won the event. He rode Old Blue, his first steer horse. Later that year he secured a steer on Old Blue in sixteen seconds flat—the fastest time of his life.

Fred Lowry won just about every steer roping event he entered in Oklahoma. He also won in most of his matched ropings, like the 1946 event in Pawhuska. In his day he not only beat Snively but also Chalk Dyer, H.D. Binns, Ben Johnson, Sr., Fred Beeson, George Weir, Hayden Rucker, and Dick Truitt.

Lowry's last two ropings were at Dewey, Oklahoma, and Vinita in 1948. He won both and retired from competition.

Looking back on his successful career, proached such a record during his career. And so the six-steer contest started.

Both ropers may have been nervous leaving the box on their first steers, for both executed their poorest and slowest runs of the day. Snively's was the worst, a deficit from which he never recovered. Lowry won (proving the confidence of his backers was worth more than a little money) with a record card of 30.5, 25.1, 29.5, 23.0, 26.4, and 23.4 for a total of 157.9 seconds. Snively's was 63.9, 23.6, 41.7, 35, 19.7, and 20.8, for a total of 204.7 seconds.

Lowry's Pawhuska win reinforced his rodeo stature, as fans already knew him well. He even capitalized on his success with an early-day product endorsement. The Veach Saddlery Company of Trenton, Missouri, once advertised in its catalog, "Lots of magazines tell of how different steer ropers win saddles made by such and such firm, but if you will happen along when the steer roper is at practice or making a showing at some contest, you will see he rides a FRED LOWRY ROPER." The saddle the Veach Company offered was "Designed by Fred Lowry, six times winner of the world's championship steer roping at Cheyenne, Wyoming."

Oklahomans of every persuasion—saddle makers, cowboys, ranchers, businessmen, livestock people, politicians—admired Lowry. He was born in Indian Territory July 3, 1892, near Claremore, though his father was from Tennessee. In those days settlers were forbidden to buy or own cattle in Indian Territory. Fred's father, however, was intent on getting into the cattle business and started purchasing stock in a Cherokee Indian's name. When the Cherokees discovered the plot in 1903, they drove Lowry's cattle across the Kansas line. But Cherokees there wanted no part of the ostracized cattle, and it took Lowry some time to reach a settlement.

Fred's father finally agreed to pay the Cherokees one dollar per head for grazing privileges and the tribe allowed him to cross his cattle back into Oklahoma. All the Lowrys, including young Fred, remained right there with the cattle, near Lenapah, from then on.

Fred learned the cattle business and learned it well. He learned to ride a horse, toss a loop,

National Cowboy Hall of Fame

Even though spelling and statistics are not quite right on this sign outside Lenapah, the Lions International had the right idea—honoring their town's rodeo champs.

Lowry once said, "My horses were half the battle." He noted that, "Two of the best ones were Buster and Sammy. Buster was first a race horse, but I schooled him for roping and was able to win Cheyenne a couple of times on him. Sammy, a sorrel with a streaked face, was one of the best looking horses you'd ever want to see, but I never knew what he'd do next."

For a few years Lowry owned the famous Joe Hancock stallion, Roan Hancock, until he sold the stud to Kay and Channing Peake's Rancho Jabali at Lompoc, California. The big red roan, with plenty of muscle and bone, produced many rope horses for Lowry, who also sold Roan Hancock foals from time to time.

Three horses with the Hancock blood in their veins were very successful. They were Joe Crow, Jr.'s, Popeye; Shoat Webster's Popcorn; and Everett Shaw's Peanuts.

Lowry's career in rodeo didn't end when he stopped competing. He judged performance classes at important quarter horse shows like Denver and the Tulsa State Fair. He worked roping events as flagman at many Oklahoma rodeos, and was the first rodeoer to conduct schools for rodeo cowboys.

Lowry did not, however, hold his schools for the money. He held roping and horsemanship classes because he liked his students and enjoyed seeing them ride well and rope fast. Kate Chouteau Lowry, Fred's wife, once told me, "Fred always said to me, 'I don't have any use for money; Dad knows what to do with it.'"

One of the best students that ever came to the Lowry Ranch was Shoat Webster, a Lenapah rancher today and a recent inductee into the Rodeo Hall of Fame at Oklahoma City's National Cowboy Hall of Fame. Shoat was Kate Lowry's nephew, and whether Fred gave him preferential treatment is unknown. What is known, and what is indelibly stamped in rodeo record books, is that Shoat Webster, following his mentor's footsteps, carved out one of the most remarkable steer roping careers in the business.

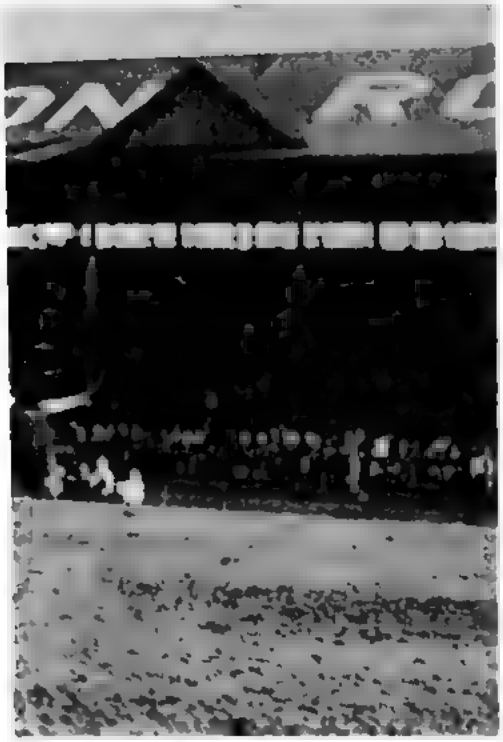
Webster not only took permanent possession of the Pendleton Round-Up's Sam Jackson Trophy in 1951, but he was also world champion steer roper four times, in 1949, 1950, 1954, and 1955. A fiercely competitive matched

Lowry ropes a huge steer at the Pendleton Round-Up in 1927. The big steers were one

National Cowboy Hall of Fame

Fred Lowry on Buster at Cheyenne. Fred once said that he won the steer roping at Cheyenne, riding Buster, "a couple of times."

National Cowboy Hall of Fame



reason why the times were slower in the old days.

steer roper, Webster took first place in many contests in Oklahoma, Texas, Wyoming, and New Mexico.

Another student came to the ranch school when he was fifteen and, when he left, was prepared to put together world steer roping championships in 1945, 1946, 1948, 1951, 1959, and 1962. In fifteen of twenty-one seasons, Everett Shaw of Stonewall, Oklahoma, placed in the top five. Fans will forever call him "the steer roper's steer roper." Shaw died in an Oklahoma City hospital November 10, 1979.

Fred Lowry took pride in teaching his roping students what he himself had learned and used in the arenas. Unlike some fast and furious ropers, Lowry was steady and consistent. He sacrificed a tiny bit of speed for a sure throw; a tiny bit more, perhaps, for a quality run.

Webster and Shaw were excellent examples of Lowry's teaching ability. They were fast, of course, but they were also careful. They seldom missed the horns; their trips were honest; and they tied the legs of steers with speed and skill.

I visited the 20,000-acre Lowry Ranch in 1953. Late on the morning of my visit, Kate Lowry prepared a lunch of roast beef and gravy, potatoes, a vegetable, salad, and cold beers. Fred and his field crew came in about noon. Their enthusiasm for the feast soon demolished it. Then Fred and I had a chat before he took the boys back to work. He spoke highly of the rodeo profession past and present, and told me for a boy to make any money today, he had to have a super horse.

"But it's always been like that," he said. "Let's go boys, let's get to work!" And he was off.

Fred Lowry died at age sixty-four on July 23, 1956, at the Methodist Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota. He had undergone surgery for cancer a few days before at the Mayo Clinic. Funeral services were held July 26 in the Lenapah High School gymnasium to accommodate the hugh crowd. Lowry was buried in the Lenapah Cemetery.

Lowry did not hold his schools for the money. He held roping and horsemanship classes because he liked his students and enjoyed seeing them ride well and rope fast. Kate Chouteau Lowry, Fred's wife, once said, "Fred always said to me, 'I don't have any use for money; Dad knows what to do with it.'"

National Cowboy Hall of Fame

In 1953 Fred still had a dummy steer for practice in his front yard at the Lowry Ranch at Lenapah, Oklahoma.

Elias Davidson Pierce
The Man Who Made a State

By ROBERT REARS

On October 25, 1852, Elias Davidson Pierce pitched his tent in a large flat area where Lapwai Creek emptied into the Clearwater River on his first visit to the country of the Nez Percé Indians. Pierce had left Yreka, California, in early August with Charles Adams, a former Hudson's Bay trapper, to trade for cattle and horses, both in demand in the southern goldfields. From the start trading was brisk, as the Nez Percés did not want Pierce trading with tribes farther north.

A few Nez Percés had learned English from missionaries and trappers, but Pierce made use of a local interpreter until he mastered enough of the language to conduct business. Pierce's honesty and desire to learn the language gained him Nez Percé respect. After two months Pierce moved his camp farther up the Clearwater River to its junction with the North Fork. He stayed at a village there, making a lasting friendship with Wishlanucker, an elderly chief who had known Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, the first United States explorers in the area. The country reminded Pierce of California, and California had gold.

Learning that he could trade for horses easier than cattle, Pierce concentrated on the former. By early 1853, he had collected 110 well-broken horses in good condition and ready for the trail. On February 25, Pierce and Adams left for California with most of the stock, leaving the rest for a second trip. The

Pierce Centennial Committee Photo

A prospector and his cabin near Pierce, Idaho.

weather had been mild, but snow began to fall after they left the Clearwater Valley. By the time they reached Pataha Creek (near present-day Pomeroy, Washington), a full-scale blizzard engulfed them. Pierce and Adams let their horses run loose and made camp to wait out the storm.

In mid-afternoon the wind died down and Pierce saddled his horse to check the herd. Discovering twelve head missing, he set out alone to find them while Adams remained behind to watch the rest of the stock. As soon as he left camp, the lull in the storm ended, but he paid little attention to the worsening weather until dark. After wandering around, in, and over several creek drainages, Pierce realized he was lost.

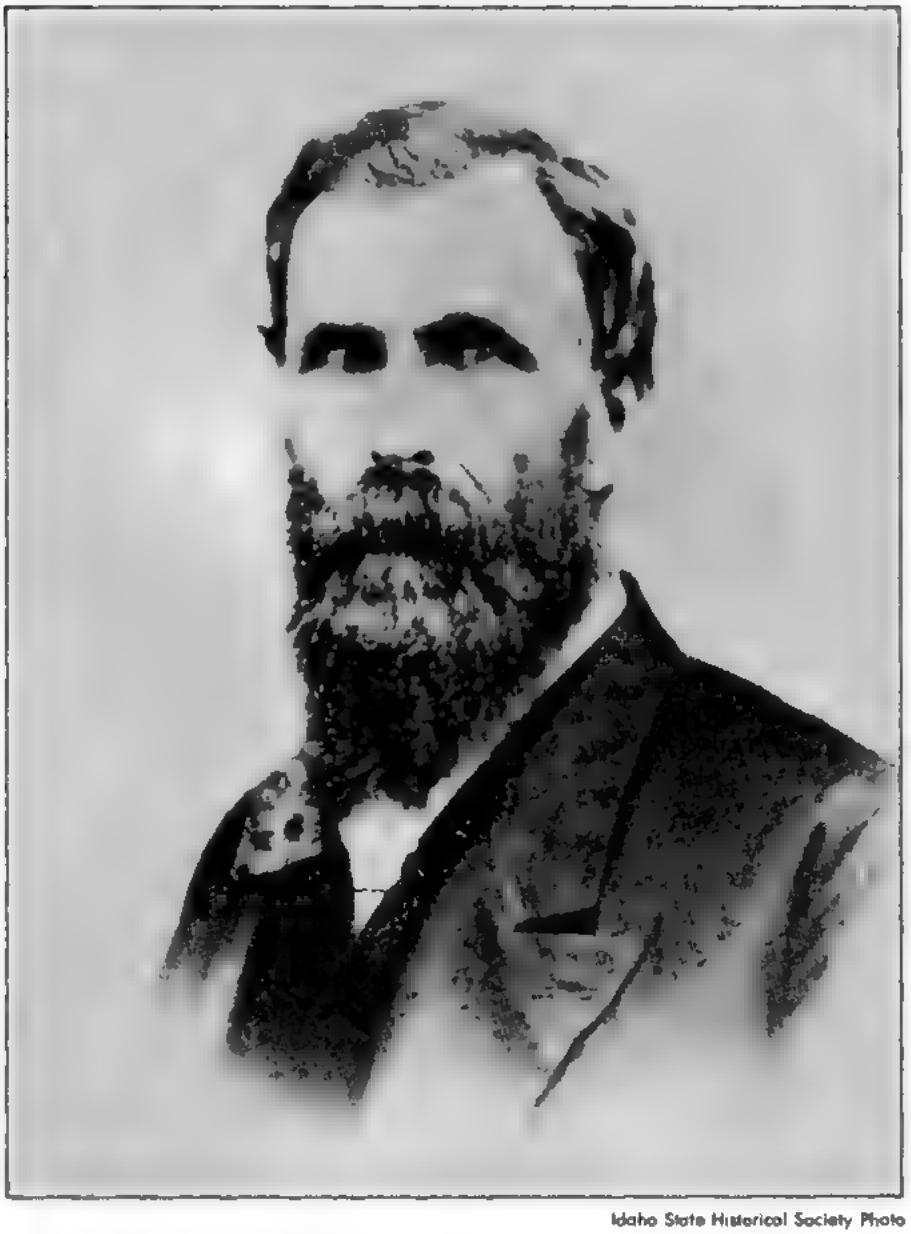
THE COUNTRY consisted of brushy hillsides, with an occasional cottonwood beside a stream. The wind picked up and the snow fell harder, cutting visibility to a few feet. Coming to a flat area, Pierce dismounted. He led his horse around in circles, trying to keep warm, as a fire was impossible. He had forgotten to bring matches and, stumbling around in the dark, doubted he could find enough wood for a fire anyway.

Pierce spent the next day and night walking and riding through the hills. He went nearly forty-eight hours without sleep before the storm cleared enough for him to locate some landmarks. He staggered into camp hungry and with toes so frozen he had to cut his boots and socks from his feet.

For the next few weeks Pierce had difficulty walking, but that did not stop him—he could still ride. Crossing Oregon in winter was not easy, with snow often several feet deep and hiding feed for the animals. But on May 11 Pierce and Adams arrived at Yreka and sold the herd for several thousand dollars. Pierce immediately returned to the Clearwater to retrieve the rest of the stock and went back to California by a different route.

Pierce did not return north for three years. In the meantime, he invested in a project to run water to Mount Shasta-area gold claims. The project failed and Pierce's money went with it.

Rumors of gold discoveries on the Frazier and Kettle rivers in British Columbia, as well as on the Pend Oreille River in Washington Territory, convinced Pierce to return to the Clearwater. Posing as a trader, Pierce left specifically to find gold. He arrived at newly built Fort Walla Walla in March 1857 loaded down with goods to resume business at Lapwai.



Idaho State Historical Society Photo

Elias Davidson Pierce, leader of a party of prospectors whose discovery of gold on Canal Creek caused a stampede to what is now Idaho.

Pierce spent the next day and night walking and riding through the hills. He went nearly forty-eight hours without sleep before the storm cleared enough for him to locate some landmarks. He staggered into camp hungry and with toes so frozen he had to cut his boots and socks from his feet.

At Walla Walla, Pierce met with William Craig, acting Indian agent to the Nez Percé and Cayuse Indians. Craig had married a Nez Percé woman while trapping for the American Fur Company and had many contacts among the Indians. He advised Pierce not to go to Lapwai, as the Yakimas and other northern nations were becoming tense over an influx of whites. The Nez Percés had told all whites, including Craig, to leave the Clearwater. He believed they were ready for war.

Claiming he only wanted to trade, Pierce thought he would be safe if he could get to Lapwai where old friends could protect him. Reluctantly, Craig gave Pierce an Indian guide so he could stay off the main trails. Pierce arrived at Lapwai at nightfall April 13. After

conferring with friends and arranging to trade, he returned to Walla Walla. While there he met with Colonel Edward Steptoe and told him of his plans to prospect the upper reaches of the Clearwater.

In 1855, the United States had signed a treaty with the Nez Percés, who, in exchange for $200,000 in trade goods, ceded most of their land to the government. However, they retained the Wallowa and Grand Ronde valleys in Oregon, as well as the land from the Snake River to the Bitterroot Mountains. The land included the Clearwater and its tributaries. Pierce believed that a gold discovery there would pave the way for settlement of the territory and wanted to inform the army of his intent.

Returning to the Lapwai, Pierce had a brisk business but spent an uneasy summer. After Yakima braves who had been visiting the Nez Percés stole some of his horses, Pierce drove his stock back to the Walla Walla Valley where, as he said, "There was a little better guarantee of life and property."

Pierce spent the winter trading and investigating ranching possibilities. The next spring war broke out. Yakimas killed an Indian agent, and violence spread east to the Palouse River where Indians killed two prospectors working a placer operation. Soldiers from Portland and Vancouver moved into the area, and Colonel Steptoe, with 169 men and two cannons, went to Palouse to investigate the killings. He did little investigating, as Indians waited for him near the present town of Rosalia. Steptoe fought a retreating action and returned to Walla Walla. Later Colonel George Wright brought an uneasy peace to the area.

Idaho State Historical Society Photo

Wilber Fisk Bassett, a member of the discovery party, credited with panning the first gold in Canal Creek.

Pierce continued ranching on Dry Creek in the Walla Walla Valley until February 1860. Loaded down with mining equipment which they had broken down and hidden or disguised as farming tools, Pierce and companion Seth Ferrell traveled to the forks of the Clearwater. Pierce spent the first few days conducting minor trading and visiting with his old friend, Wishlanucker. On February 20, Pierce showed him how to pan for gold, and explained that the yellow metal was worth money. Wishlanucker, after observing a few colors in the pan, became quite excited.

The next day Pierce and Ferrell prospected a few miles farther up the river, finding gold at nearly every place they panned. With Wishlanucker and several other Nez Percés, they returned to Walla Walla for enough supplies to outfit an extended prospecting venture.

Arriving at Walla Walla, Pierce called on Andrew Cain, the new Indian agent, told him of his discovery, and asked for permission to cross the reservation and prospect farther east. After thinking it over a few days, Cain refused the request, believing the expedition would start another war. Pierce wanted official permission, but decided to go without it if necessary.

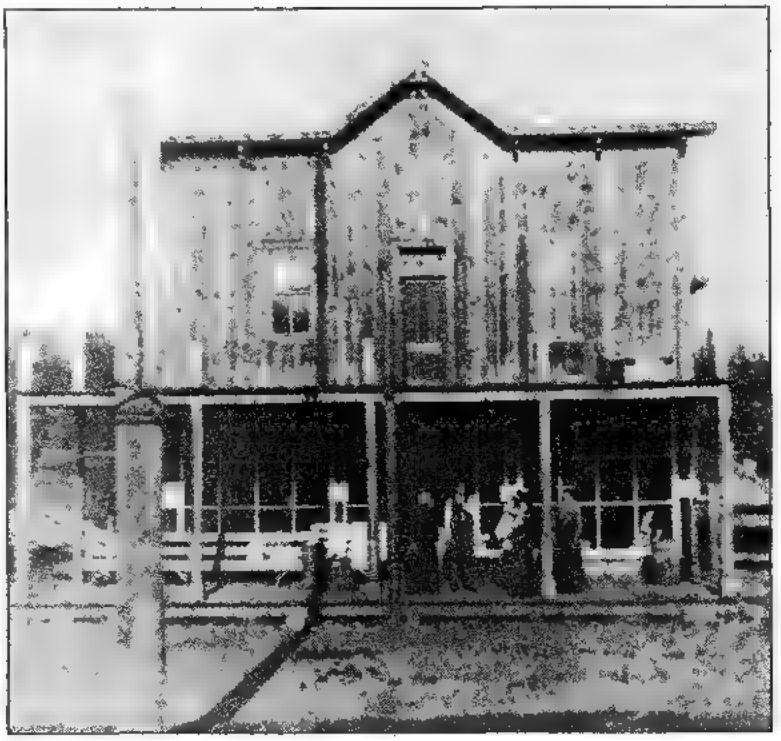
Unable to buy the right equipment for serious mining, Pierce sent Wishlanucker back to the Clearwater, then went on to The Dalles, a small village on the Columbia River. After purchasing the needed equipment, Pierce went directly to Lapwai where he obtained

Idaho State Historical Society Photo

Looking down the Main Street of Pierce, Idaho, around 1900.

Author's Photo

Pierce Centennial Committee Photo



Left: Pierce Courthouse, the oldest government building in Idaho. It was built in 1862 at a cost of $3,700. Right: Main Street of Pierce, Idaho, in the 1880s.

permission to cross the reservation from Charles Frush, a subagent under Cain who was conducting business at Lapwai. Continuing on the forks of the Clearwater, Pierce discovered that Wishlanucker was having second thoughts; he wanted to consult with Chief Lawyer and other influential Nez Percés before allowing any prospecting to begin. On May 4, while meeting with Lawyer, Pierce was surprised to see two white men ride into camp. Suspecting that someone was following him, Pierce postponed the expedition.

At Walla Walla, Pierce called on the Indian agent, told him of his discovery, and asked for permission to cross the reservation and prospect farther east. After thinking it over a few days, Cain refused the request, believing the expedition would start another war. Pierce wanted official permission, but decided to go without it.

BACK IN Walla Walla, Pierce discovered that word of the expedition had leaked. People besieged him with requests to accompany him to the Nez Percé country whenever he decided to return. Soon, handbills appeared announcing a meeting for all those interested in prospecting the Clearwater. At the meeting Pierce said he did not plan to cross the reservation on his next trip, but intended to go around. Andrew Cain also attended the meeting and said he was duty-bound to protect the Indians' rights, but could not object as long as no one entered Indian land.

Although many men had told Pierce they wanted to accompany him on his next trip, only ten actually left with him on August 12. The party traveled to the Snake River and then, fearing Indian agents or the army might stop them, circled northeast across the Palouse. For nearly two months they hacked their way through heavy timber and steep river canyons, sometimes only making a mile or two a day. Once, with just enough room for their horses, the men spent the night on a canyon wall so steep they slept on the uphill side of trees to keep from falling. They crossed the North Fork of the Clearwater about fifty miles upstream from its mouth and entered heavy timber. Occasionally a member of the party climbed a tree to scout the easiest route.

Finally, on September 30, 1860, with their supplies running low, the party made camp in a small, pleasant meadow that would later be known as Canal Creek. After supper, twenty-four-year-old Wilber Bassett grabbed a pan and shovel and headed for the nearby stream. A few minutes later he returned with news he had found some traces of gold. The other prospectors were too tired to respond, but the next morning the entire party began panning the nearby draws and streams. The men became excited, yelling to each other that they were finding gold, and lots of it.

On October 2 the party moved a short distance downstream where Canal Creek joined a larger body of water, which they named Oro Fino Creek for the fine gold they found there. During the next few days the men kept busy prospecting and exploring. Keeping two rockers going, they collected over one hundred dollars in fine dust. By then supplies were nearly gone. The party decided to return to Walla Walla by a more direct route and broke camp early on the morning of October 12. A few days later a party of Nez Percés helped them across the Snake River.

Arriving in Walla Walla, the prospectors placed the gold in baking powder cans and displayed them in the window of a store; that brought the response Pierce wanted. By the middle of November, thirty-three well-supplied

Author's Photo

Looking down on Pierce, Idaho, from School House Hill.

prospectors, including seven members of the discovery party, were on their way to Oro Fino Creek. Pierce, however, was not one of them. Entrusting his interests in the discovery to friends, he spent the winter convincing the Washington territorial legislature to give him building rights to a toll road from Walla Walla to the new mines. The legislature approved the project January 10, 1861.

The prospectors arrived on Oro Fino Creek in early December 1860, finding eight inches of snow on the ground. They immediately whipsawed lumber to build sluice boxes and shelters. Soon they discovered how cold it could get, especially along the creek where, even on a clear day, the sun only lingered for a few hours in the afternoon.

By mid-January the prospectors had organized a mining district complete with laws based on the ones California miners used. They elected officers, established a method of settling disputes, and soon laid out a townsite along the creek and named it Pierce City. The weather was too cold for the men to do much mining, but by mid-March they had collected $800 worth of gold, which they sent to Walla Walla for display before having it shipped to Portland. Word of the discovery spread through the northwest.

WHEN THE SNOW melted, hundreds of miners from Walla Walla, British Columbia, and as far away as California, poured into the new district; they filed more than 1,600 claims before the end of June. A second town, christened Oro Fino City, sprang up a mile away. With more miners than available claims, prospectors looked further afield and made more discoveries. At the confluence of the Clearwater and Snake rivers, miners built Lewiston, a tent city and supply center. Within a year more residents were in what was becoming known as Idaho than were in the rest of Washington Territory.

Finding gold, not mining it, interested Pierce. With steamboats able to negotiate the Snake as far as Lewiston, and competition from well financed express companies, his chance of profit from his proposed road seemed slim. He returned to the new mines only briefly. Selling his claim, Pierce turned to other ventures. He bought and herded cattle from California to his ranch at Dry Creek, a short distance from Walla Walla, where he fattened and sold them to hungry miners. Later he traveled to the Boise Basin when he heard of gold discoveries there.

In October 1863, a few months after Idaho became a territory, Pierce left the northwest for good. He spent the rest of his life restlessly wandering from place to place, trying to regain the feeling of discovery. He died in 1897, disillusioned, leaving too little money to pay for his funeral.

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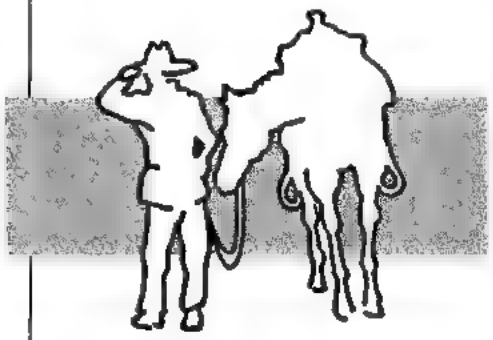

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☐ 6-10 years ☐ 26+ years

How do you obtain *True West*?
☐ Subscription ☐ Bookstore
☐ Convenience store ☐ Friend/relative
☐ Grocery store ☐ Other _____

How many people, including yourself, read your issue of *True West*? _____

How much time do you spend reading or looking through a typical issue of *True West*?
☐ Less than 30 mins. ☐ 2-3 hours
☐ 30-59 mins. ☐ 3-4 hours
☐ 1-2 hours ☐ 4+ hours

What do you do with your copy of *True West* when you are finished reading it?
☐ Save it
☐ Donate it to a library
☐ Give it up for recycling
☐ Give it to someone else
☐ Clip and save items of interest
☐ Discard it
☐ Other _____

Which of the following editorial areas of *True West* do you read regularly?
☐ From the Editor ☐ Truly Western
☐ Feature Articles ☐ Answer Man
☐ Western Roundup ☐ Wild Old Days
☐ Book Reviews ☐ Trails Grown Dim

What kinds of feature articles in *True West* do you like to read? Check as many as apply.
☐ Biography ☐ Outlaws/lawmen
☐ Blacks in the West ☐ Railroads/trans.
☐ Buried treasure ☐ Ranching
☐ Collectibles ☐ Rodeos
☐ Ghost towns ☐ Town history
☐ Hist. preservation ☐ Trail drives
☐ Homesteading ☐ Weaponry
☐ Indians ☐ Western films/actors
☐ Military ☐ Western foods
☐ Mining ☐ Women
☐ Mountain Men ☐ Other _____
☐ Natural History

Would you subscribe to *True West* on audio cassette tape if it was available on a monthly basis? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you prefer:
☐ the present mix of long & short articles.
☐ more short articles, fewer long ones.
☐ more long articles, fewer short ones.

Do you prefer the longest articles:
☐ printed as one article in a single issue.
☐ printed in two or more parts in consecutive issues.
☐ I would prefer no extra-long articles.

On average the number of photos and illustrations per article is:
☐ just right. ☐ not enough.
☐ too many.

READING HABITS

How much money do you spend on books in a month?
☐ Less than $20 ☐ $51-75
☐ $21-30 ☐ $76-99
☐ $31-50 ☐ $100+

How many books do you read in a month?
☐ 0-1 ☐ 4-5 ☐ 9-11
☐ 2-3 ☐ 6-8 ☐ 12+

How many times a month do you visit a bookstore?
☐ 0 ☐ 3-4 ☐ 8-9
☐ 1-2 ☐ 5-7 ☐ 10+

How many times a month do you buy books by mail or phone order?
☐ 0 ☐ 3-4 ☐ 8-9
☐ 1-2 ☐ 5-7 ☐ 10+

Do you ever buy books directly from a publisher?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you purchase primarily:
☐ Hardcover ☐ Paperback ☐ Audio

Do you use books primarily for:
☐ Reference ☐ Gifts
☐ Learning ☐ Business
☐ Entertainment ☐ Collecting

What types of western books are most interesting to you? Check no more than 5.
☐ American Indians ☐ Military
☐ Biography ☐ Mining/treasure
☐ Blacks in the West ☐ Motion pictures/TV
☐ Collectibles ☐ Mountain men
☐ Cowboy life ☐ Novels
☐ Cowboy poetry ☐ Outlaws/lawmen
☐ Custerana ☐ Railroads/trans.
☐ Exploration ☐ Ranching
☐ Ghost towns ☐ Town history
☐ Homesteading ☐ Weaponry
☐ Humor ☐ Women
☐ Journals/diaries ☐ Other _____

Are you a member of a book club?
☐ Yes ☐ No

(continued on next page)

How many audio books or books on tape do you purchase each month?
☐ 0 ☐ 3-4 ☐ 8-9
☐ 1-2 ☐ 5-7 ☐ 10+

Have you ever purchased a book reviewed in *True West* because of the review?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you ever purchased a book advertised in *True West* because of the advertisement?
☐ Yes ☐ No

What other media influence your book-buying choices?
☐ Other magazines ☐ Television
☐ Newspapers ☐ Movies
☐ Radio ☐ Do not buy books

Do you read *Old West*?
☐ Yes ☐ No

How many magazines do you subscribe to or read regularly?
☐ 0-1 ☐ 4-5 ☐ 8-9
☐ 2-3 ☐ 6-7 ☐ 9+

Please list your three favorites: _____
_____
_____

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

How many times a year do you attend or participate in the following activities?
Movies
__ Sporting events
__ Rodeos
__ Musical concerts
__ Western lectures
__ Museums/exhibits
__ Hunting
__ Treasure hunting
__ Birdwatching
__ Woodworking
__ Poetry gatherings
Indian powwows
__ Hist reenactments
__ Gardening
__ Hiking
__ Gunfight exhibits
__ Gun shows
__ Golf/tennis
__ Trail rides
__ Fishing
__ Camping
__ Antique auctions
__ Genealogy work
__ Hist. preservation
__ Other _____

What type of music do you listen to?
☐ Country western ☐ Big band
☐ Folk ☐ Easy listening
☐ Gospel ☐ Rock
☐ Classical ☐ Jazz
☐ Blue grass ☐ Other _____

Do you own a:
☐ Television ☐ Cellular phone
☐ VCR ☐ Computer
☐ Fax machine ☐ Mac ☐ IBM-type
☐ CD player ☐ Tape player

How many video cassettes do you purchase a year?
☐ 0 ☐ 3-4 ☐ 7-8
☐ 1-2 ☐ 5-6 ☐ 9+

How many video cassettes do you rent a year?
☐ 0 ☐ 11-25 ☐ 46-70
☐ 1-10 ☐ 26-45 ☐ 71+

Do you travel primarily by:
☐ Car ☐ Train ☐ Walk
☐ Bus ☐ Bicycle ☐ Other ____

Your preferred mode of interstate or foreign travel is:
☐ Air ☐ Train ☐ Car
☐ Boat ☐ Bus ☐ Other ____

How many times a year do you travel at least 100 miles round trip?
☐ 0 ☐ 2-3 ☐ 6-7
☐ 1 ☐ 4-5 ☐ 8+

How many times have you vacationed in the following locales in the past 5 years?
__ Pacific Coast
__ US Northwest
__ US Southwest
__ US Midwest
__ US East
__ US Southeast
__ Hawaii
__ Alaska
__ Mexico
__ Canada
__ South America
__ Africa
__ Europe
__ Central America
__ Far East
__ Caribbean
__ Middle East
__ Other _____

Do you travel primarily for:
☐ Business ☐ Research ☐ Pleasure

Do you take a vacation every year?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you most likely to spend your vacation:
☐ With relatives/friends at their homes
☐ Camping/outdoors
☐ On a planned tour, cruise, etc.
☐ At a hotel/motel in an urban area
☐ At a resort/dude ranch in a non-urban area
☐ Other _____

Please list three of your favorite hobbies:
_____
_____
_____

BUYING HABITS

Have you purchased any of the following items in the last six months? Please indicate approximate number of purchases.
__ Coins __ Stamps __ Television
__ Art prints __ Automobile __ Truck
__ Tobacco products __ Camera equip.
__ Horse tack __ Guns/ammunition
__ Western relics __ Western clothing
__ Camping equip. __ Western books
__ Treasure hunting equipment
__ Indian-related items

When you have extra money, you are most likely to spend it on:
_____
_____

Approximately how much did you spend on mail or phone order purchases during the past 12 months? $_____

Do you wear western-style apparel?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, indicate the approximate number of your purchases of the following items during the past 12 months?
__ Boots __ Belt __ Outerwear
__ Shirt __ Hat __ Slacks
__ Other _____

Have you used a toll-free number to order a product or service during the past 12 months? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Which type of credit card do you use primarily?
☐ VISA ☐ Discover
☐ MasterCard ☐ Do not use credit cards
☐ American Express

Besides *True West* what products have you purchased from Western Publications in the past 12 months?
☐ Back issues ☐ Binders
☐ *Old West* sub ☐ Book Mart
☐ Western Art Prints ☐ Western Graphics
☐ Calendar ☐ Index
☐ *Hunter's* sub ☐ Western Outpost
☐ Barbed Wire Press ☐ Nothing

SUGGESTIONS

What do you like most about *True West*?
_____
_____

What do you like least about *True West*?
_____
_____

What would you like to see improved or changed in *True West*?
_____
_____
_____

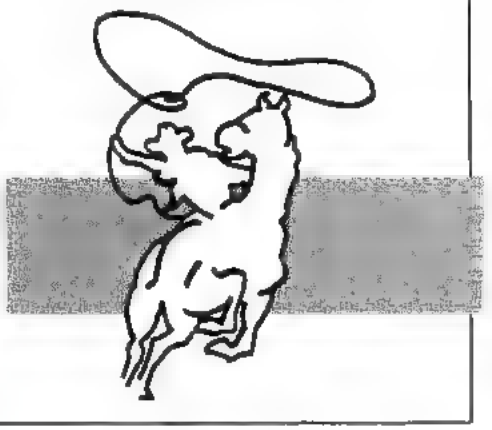
Additional comments: _____
_____
_____
_____

☐ Mark this box and print your name and address below if you would like to receive a **FREE** issue of *True West*. Offer expires September 1, 1992. **Remember:** You only need to supply your name and address if you wish a free issue. Otherwise, you may respond anonymously

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip_____

Thank you again for your time. It is greatly appreciated. Mail your survey to:

TRUE WEST READERSHIP SURVEY
P.O. Box 2107
Stillwater, OK 74076



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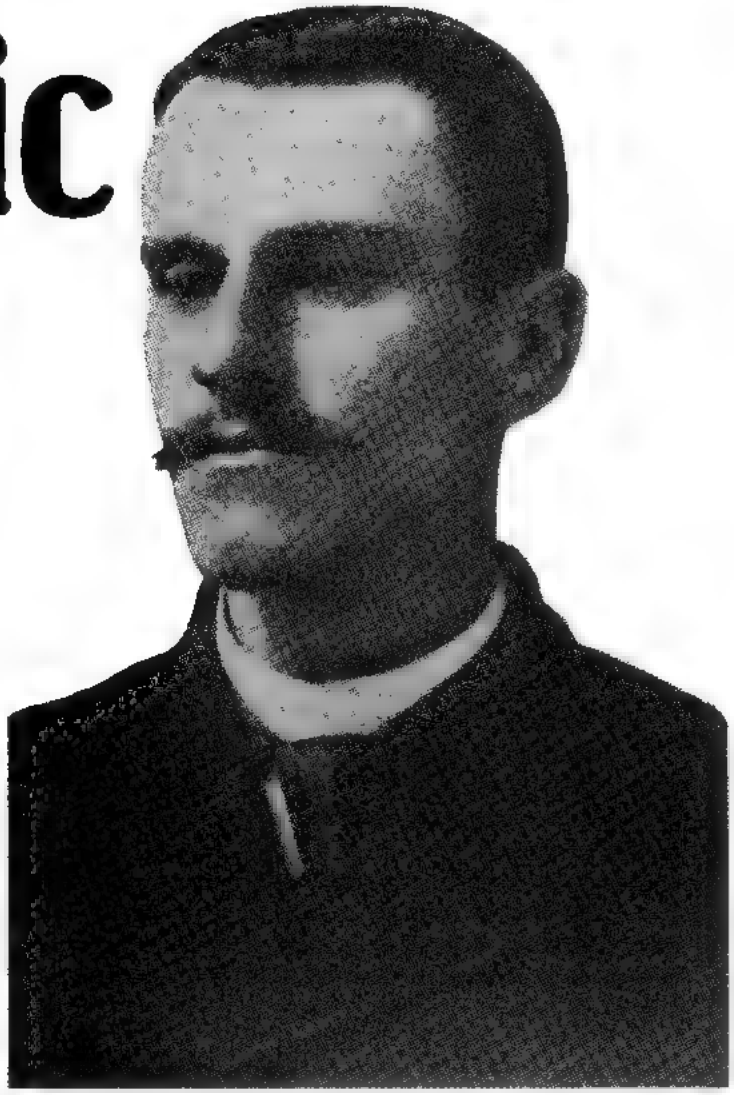
Frederic Homer Balch

By JAN HOLDEN

Indian rituals, games, and folkways enchanted Fred, always the keen observer. Among his favorite legends was one about a great stone archway which once existed across the Columbia—a "Bridge of the Gods."



Oregon author and clergyman, Frederic Homer Balch, taken while he was a student at the Pacific Theological Seminary in Oakland, California.

Author's Collection

Thomas and Delia Coon were returning to their farm in the Hood River Valley of Oregon when they noticed a handbill posted on a pine tree. It announced that the Reverend F.H. Balch would be lecturing at the Hood River schoolhouse that evening. The Coons were schoolteachers and seldom missed a cultural event, but this particular evening they were tired and decided to stay home.

The following day a neighbor stopped by to describe the young speaker to the couple, saying "Balch is a fine looking man, a good speaker and probably a graduate of some eastern college." Without realizing it, the Coons' neighbor had paid the clergyman a compliment, for Frederic Homer Balch had never even seen an eastern college. In fact, the total of his formal education consisted of six months in grammar school. His teacher had been none other than Delia Coon.

Delia was quite surprised when, later that day, Fred Balch stopped by the farm to pay his respects. Yet four years later, in 1890, Delia Coon would be more surprised to learn that her lanky former pupil had penned what many consider the most famous novel to emerge from the pioneer Northwest—*The Bridge of the Gods*.

Frederic Homer Balch was born in Lebanon, Oregon, December 14, 1861. His father, James Balch, was a graduate of Wabash College and a student of law, though he never applied for admission to the bar. The elder Balch went to Oregon in 1851 and became a teacher, taking every opportunity to promote culture within his community. A lover of music and literature, James Balch later opened a picture gallery where he made and sold daguerreotypes.

Frederic's mother, Harriet Snyder Balch, had her hands full raising five children. Orphaned as a young girl, Harriet was anxious to establish close family ties with her brood. She heaped attention upon all of her children, but Frederic especially for she had earmarked her third-born for the ministry. Being a staunch Christian woman, she could envision no higher calling for a Balch. It troubled her greatly that for many years Fred ignored her Biblical lessons, preferring to study the Indians of the region, and their legends, rituals, and lore.

Aside from her concern for Frederic's soul, Harriet had other troubles. A chronic asthma sufferer, her condition made it necessary for the family to leave Oregon's Willamette Valley for Goldendale, Washington Territory, east of the Cascades, where the drier climate suited her better.

In 1871 the family sailed eastward up the Columbia River Gorge. The trip was particularly impressive to ten-year-old Fred, who possessed his father's artistic nature and sensibilities. Surrounded by the awesome majesty of the Columbia River, the grandeur of snow-topped peaks, and towering conifers, Fred felt as lowly as one of Jonathan Swift's Lilliputians. Yet those larger-than-life impressions would one day manifest themselves in Balch's historical novel.

In 1871, however, Fred's love for writing had to wait its turn. Getting a new farm started required more back work than bookwork, and the family ex-

Both Author's Photos

Left: The monument of Genevra Whitcomb, who died five years before Balch, stands a few yards from the granite boulder in the Lyle-Balch cemetery. Above: The Pine Hill School (later named the Balch School) near Lyle, Washington, still stands. Fred helped to build the edifice and filled the pulpit in addition to serving as a circuit rider.

pected Fred to help clear land, plant, and harvest. He pitched right in, working until evening. After dinner he read Milton, Macaulay, Shakespeare, Dickens—or any book he could find.

By 1876 Harriet's health had vastly improved, and the family returned to Western Oregon, settling in Multnomah County, six miles east of Portland. Here Fred had his first formal education. Home training under his father enabled him to enroll in the seventh grade at the Mount Tabor public school, where he met Thomas and Delia Coon.

Fred excelled in mental arithmetic and history, but professed to despise grammar. Still the young man spent hours each evening composing short stories, historical essays, and poetry to show his teacher. His work so impressed Delia Coon that she took Fred to task for his penmanship and spelling. Fred grudgingly accepted his teacher's advice, though her council came nearly too late, for school closed in March 1877, and within a few months the Balch family moved once again. That was the end of Fred's formal education and the last time the Coons would see him until their 1886 reunion.

In 1880 the Balches settled in the tiny community of Lyle on the north side of the Columbia. More than any previous residence, that place represented "home" to Fred. Still, the living was no easier, for Harriet was experiencing poor health and Fred's father, suffering mental problems, went to live with his sister in Indiana. For the first time Fred had to play a larger role in the support of the family. In 1882 a drought ruined the Balches' crops, so Fred secured a job with the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. He crossed the river by rowboat each morning, worked ten hours breaking rock and laying track, then returned by rowboat each evening. But rather than going straight to bed, Fred stoked the fire in with pine knots so that he could read and write until he could no longer keep his eyes open. The desire to write a book, "to make Oregon as famous as Scott had made Scotland," fast became Fred's consuming passion.

In Lyle, Fred laid the groundwork for his literary efforts. He learned Chinook Jargon, which Indians of the region used widely, so he could gain entrance into their villages and understand their legends. Indian rituals, games, and folkways enchanted Fred, always the keen observer. He particularly enjoyed hearing the elders tell and retell their stories around the campfires. Among his favorite legends was one about a great stone archway which once existed across the Columbia—a land bridge which allowed the Indians to cross from one side to the other, dry-shod.

This "Bridge of the Gods" had a basis in fact. Geological research has ascertained that periodic volcanic action from Mount Hood, Mount St. Helens, and Mount Adams, created a natural dam in the area.

Fred's visits with tribal leaders lubricated his creative mind. To preserve some of the Indians' culture, Fred began grafting pieces together for a book that would render a vivid portrayal of the Indians' communal life before the arrival of whites.

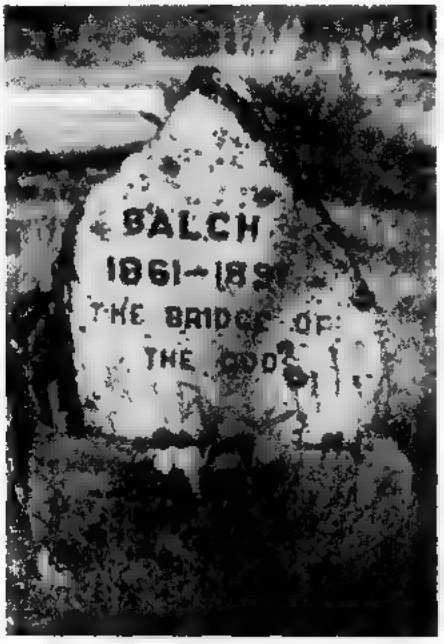
About the same time that Fred was discovering the trials of authorship, he fell in love. The girl was Genevra Whitcomb, the attractive daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Whitcomb, prominent neighbors in the small Lyle community.

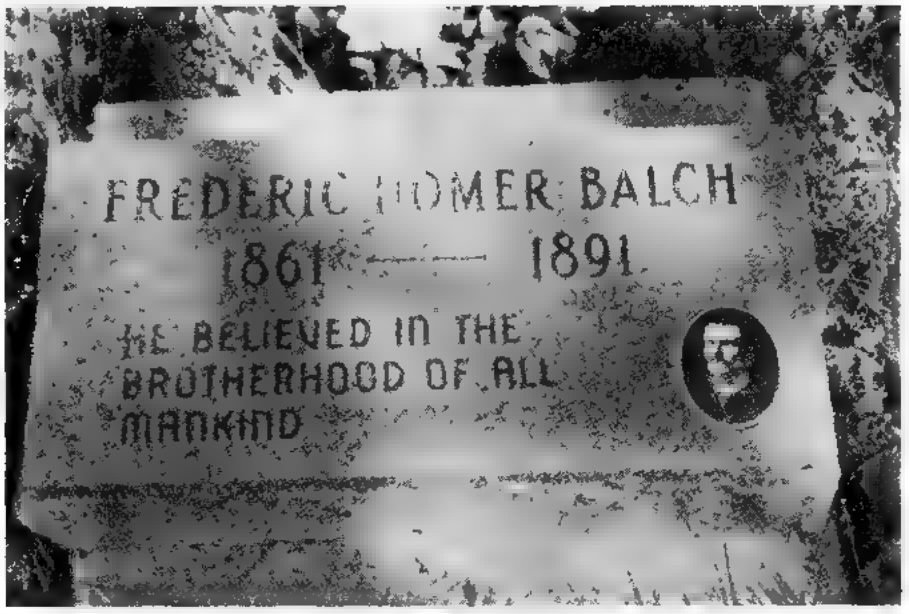
The Whitcombs owned a seventy-seven acre ranch and were much more financially secure than the Balches. Though the community knew Thomas Whitcomb for his fiery temper, they also respected him and frequently asked him to conduct local church services when the pulpit was empty. Fred's enchantment with Genevra probably lured him to attend services and finally dedicate his life to the ministry.

One thing is certain—after Fred underwent conversion, he did not deviate from his path. In 1884 he became an ordained minister and took leadership of a small Congregational church in White Salmon, Washington Territory. He preached two Sundays each month.

In 1886 the Congregational Church organized in Hood River, and Fred assumed the pulpit there. In January of that year Balch's sweetheart, Genevra, died of pneumonia. The family asked Fred to conduct the funeral service, which he did with quiet dignity and little show of emotion. Yet after the body was lowered into the frigid ground, Fred confided to his younger sister, Gertrude,

Both Author's Photos





Left: The granite boulder which marks Balch's grave was taken from the family property in Lyle, Washington. Right: A newer memorial was purchased through public donations and erected after 1970.

that he would probably never have to undergo a tougher ordeal than bidding good-bye to sweet Genevra.

Though most of Fred's life now belonged to his clerical duties, he still believed he had a book to write. His efforts resulted in a book that was essentially a romance between a young Caucasian missionary, Cecil Gray, and Indian princess Wallulah, daughter of Chief Multnomah. The conflict evolves because Gray is torn between his religious duty and his love for Wallulah. Though he had originally titled his manuscript "Cecil Gray, Missionary," a friend, whose literary abilities Fred respected, suggested changing the title to "The Bridge of the Gods."

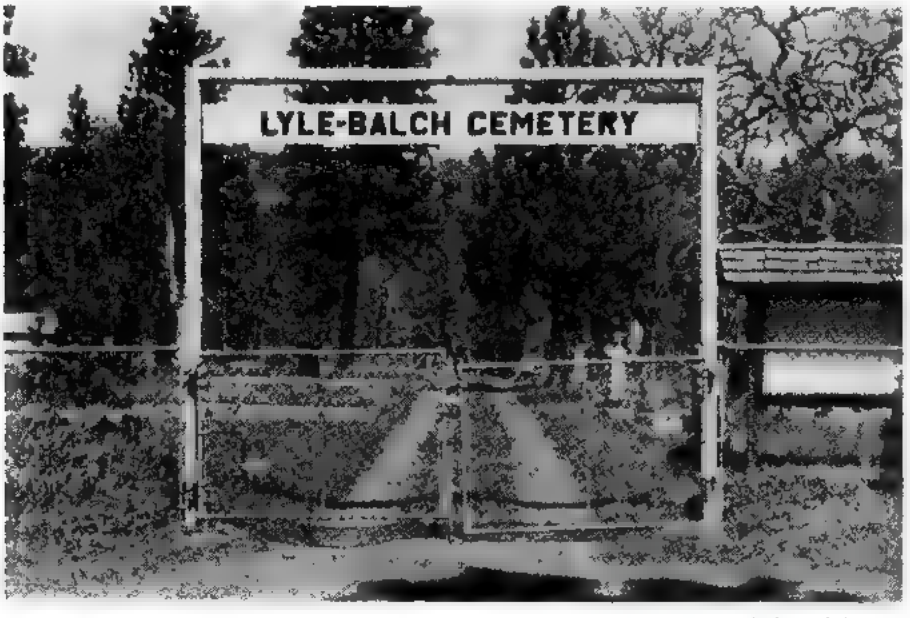
During 1887 Fred wrote and rewrote the manuscript, and when he was finally satisfied that he had accomplished his work, he began sending it to publisher after publisher; each rejected the book. Finally, thinking he had failed, Fred boxed up the manuscript and stored it among some odds and ends at the family home where it remained, temporarily abandoned.

Fortunately, county school superintendent Nelson Brooks (who had once boarded with the Balches) believed in Fred's story. After speaking with a representative of the McClurg and Company publishing house of Chicago, Brooks knew he had an interested publisher.

Brooks met Fred and the two proceeded to retrieve the manuscript; they found it in a pile of debris Harriet Balch had stacked for burning. Fred spent additional late evenings cleaning up some of the soiled pages, but when he finished, McClurg and Company accepted it. They printed the first 1,500 copies in October 1890. The book never became a mainstream best-seller, but its sales have remained steady.

Fred did not receive a copy himself for several months, as he had taken leave of absence from his church to study at the Pacific Theological Seminary in Oakland, California. While he was away his health failed and in April 1891 forced him to give up his studies and return home. On June 3, 1891, less than eight months after his book was published, Frederic Homer Balch died of tuberculosis at Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland, Oregon.

A boat returned Fred's body to Lyle. He was buried just west of the Pine Hill Church where he had served as a pastor. Genevra Whitcomb's grave was just a few yards away. A granite boulder, which Fred himself unearthed while clearing land, marks his grave. The young author had commented on the shape of the stone, suggesting to a friend it would one day make a fine tombstone. It did; Frederic Homer Balch, pioneer author and Northwest clergyman, lies beneath that unhewn stone—but his book lives on.



Author's Collection

The Lyle-Balch Cemetery, where members of the Balch family and their neighbors are buried.

New First Lady of

By MARIAN MEYER

There is a new first lady of the Santa Fe Trail. Mary Dodson Donoho arrived in Santa Fe with her husband, William, their nine-month-old daughter, Mary Ann, 184 Missouri adventurers, and a wagon train of freight in 1833, thirteen years before the famed Susan Shelby Magoffin. Magoffin has long been celebrated as the first Anglo-American woman to cross the trail from Missouri to Santa Fe. Her dethroning comes hard, but history must now record that she was at least the sixth.

The teenage bride of forty-five-year-old trader Samuel Magoffin left a detailed and exuberant diary of her 1846 journey, over forty pages of which she devoted to the thirty-two days they spent in Santa Fe. No one challenged Magoffin's claim of being "the first American lady who has come under such auspices," and "the first under any circumstances that ever crossed the Plains," undoubtedly because by the time of the diary's publication in 1926 all the earlier female travelers were dead or forgotten.

But sixteen women preceded Magoffin. Eleven of them were non-Americans; of those, nine came before Mary Donoho and two after. Beginning in 1828, Santa Fean Carmel Benevides Robidoux traveled the trail for several years with her husband, Antoine. In 1829 six Spanish women, their husbands, and an armed escort left Santa Fe traveling east, not west, on the Santa Fe Trail, banished from New Mexico for political and religious reasons by decree of the Mexican Congress. In *Commerce of the Prairies,* Josiah Gregg writes that on his first expedition across the plains in 1831 he traveled with the exiles on their return to New Mexico. He also noted that other women had crossed the prairies at different times, including "two respectable French ladies, who now reside in Chihuahua."

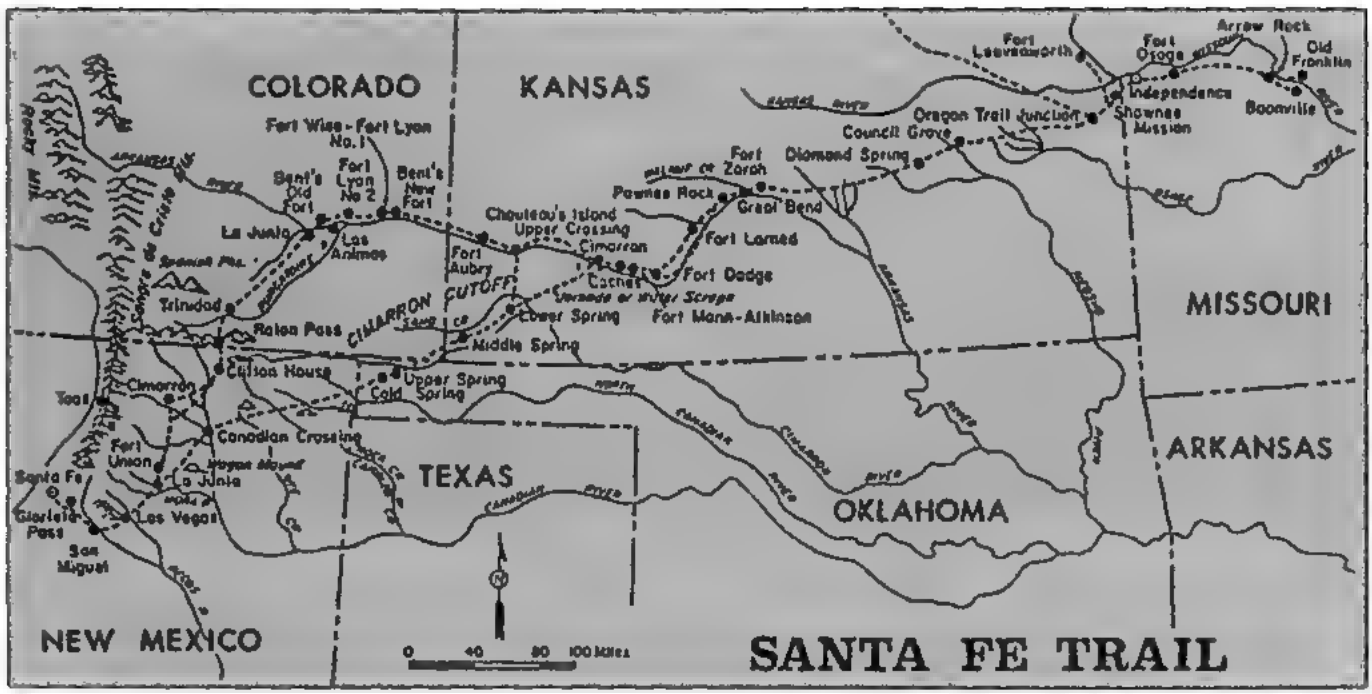
Elma Cornelius McWhorter Collection

Mary Donoho, circa 1859, from a tintype less than two by three inches. She was about fifty years old

THE TWO non-American women who traveled the trail after Donoho were "a nice little Dutch woman, accompanying her husband," and Santa Fean Soledad Abreu Leitensdorfer. The Dutch woman was the only female in a caravan of eighty-seven men in 1841. Leitensdorfer made the trip to Missouri with her merchant husband in March 1846, only six months before the Magoffins arrived. In fact, the Leitensdorfers invited the Magoffins to dine with them.

Thus, Mary Donoho was the first Anglo-American woman to cross the Santa Fe Trail from the United States; however, virtually no documentation about Donoho exists in New Mexico. Mary's traveling companions apparently left no record of her presence on the trip; Santa Fe had no newspapers to record the comings and goings of traders; and Mary kept no journal. Three letters that her son, James, wrote fifty years later document Donoho's time in Santa Fe. Records in Texas,

the Santa Fe Trail



Courtesy of Texas Western Press, University of Texas at El Paso

where she spent the last forty years of her life, help flesh out the rest of her story.

Born in Tennessee in 1807, Mary was one of ten children of Dr. James and Lucy Davis Dodson. She may have acquired an urge to travel early in life, as her family moved westward many times, finally settling in Camden County, Missouri, where James is credited with founding Glaize City. Only a small, neglected cemetery remains there.

Mary Dodson may not have lived in Glaize City for more than a few years. By 1831 she was in Columbia where Boone County marriage records state "a teacher of Christianity, M.P. Wills, performed the rite of marriage between William Donaho and Mary Dodson on November 27, 1831." Their first eighteen months were momentous. Mary's father died; she had Mary Ann; she and William bought and sold several pieces of property in Columbia; and they left for Santa Fe. Profits from their land deals may have financed the trip.

In 1833, twelve years after William Becknell opened trade to Santa Fe, a wagon train carried twenty-five-year-old Mary Donoho on her historic westward journey. She accompanied 328 men: 184 traders under Charles Bent, and 144 soldiers in an army escort captained by William N. Wickliffe.

In 1833, twelve years after William Becknell opened trade to Santa Fe, a wagon train carried twenty-five-year-old Mary Donoho on her historic westward journey. She accompanied 328 men: 184 traders under Charles Bent, and 144 soldiers in an army escort captained by William N. Wickliffe. They intended to rendezvous at Round Prairie, near the Missouri line, on May 15, but one of the muddiest springs on record delayed their departure. The wagon train left Diamond Grove, in what is now Kansas, on June 20. Wickliffe's escort accompanied them only so far as the Lower Crossing of the Arkansas River, where the traders headed into Mexican Territory. They reached Santa Fe safely on August 4.

James later said his parents liked Santa Fe and probably would have stayed if not for a violent uprising against Governor Albino Perez in 1837. Then William Donoho hastened his family away from danger to Missouri. The family later moved to Texas where they lived out their lives.

When James visited Santa Fe in 1885, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* reported, "This gentleman is a native of Santa Fe, having opened his infant peepers here on the 15th of May 1837—nearly half a century ago. In company with about 150 Missouri adventurers, Mr. Donoho's father, mother, and an older sister crossed over the historic 'Santa Fe Trail' in the year 1833. After disposing of a large quantity of freight which they brought in with them, Mr. Donoho, Sr., engaged in the hotel business on the plaza, and as far as this gentleman can make out, occupied the celebrated 'old

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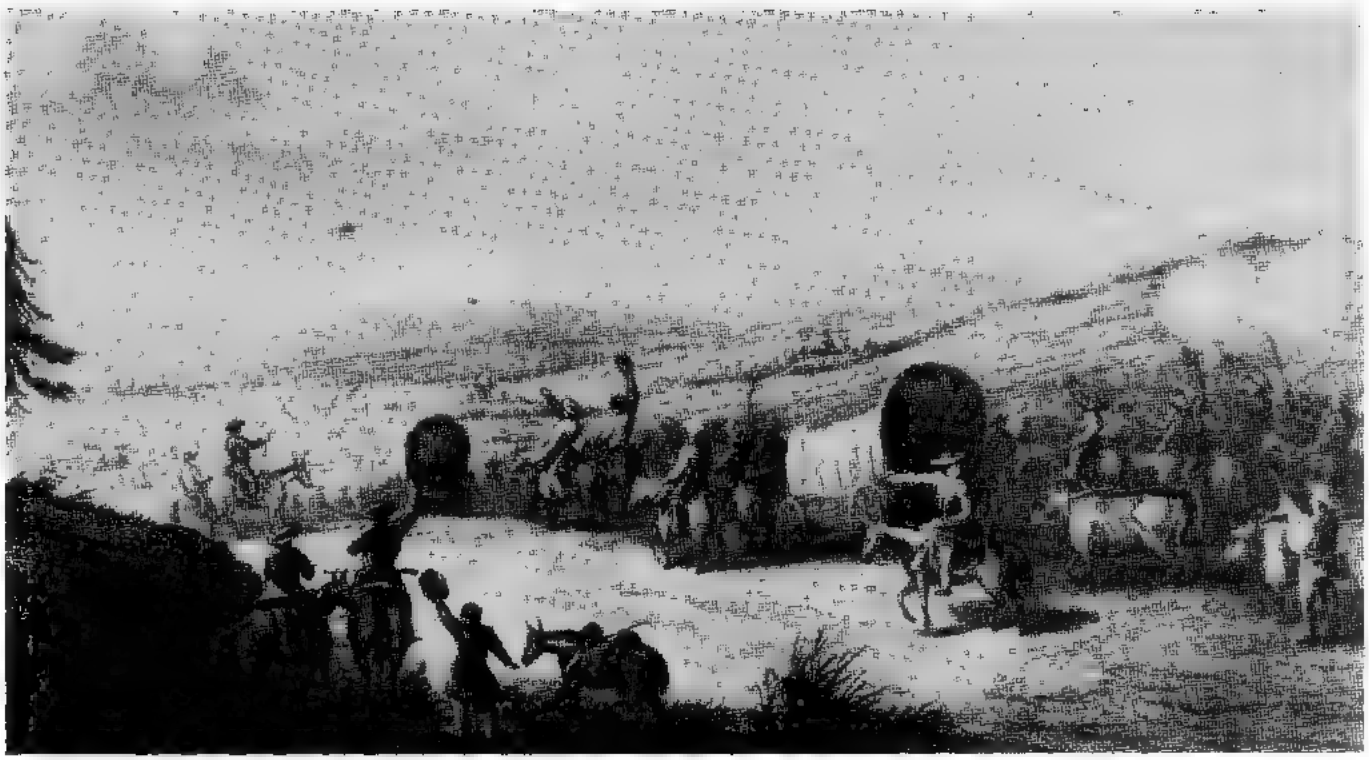

Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 45011

Arrival of the caravan at Santa Fe, from *Commerce of the Prairies* by Josiah Gregg, 1844.

"I forgot to mention that while in Santa Fe it was settled to my satisfaction, that my second sister—born in 1835, and myself, born in 1837, were the first white Americans born in Santa Fe. The honor or distinction . . . had been claimed by others in behalf of one born there in 1838, but which was later than my own and sisters."

Fonda' or Exchange Hotel as it is now called." According to most early writers, the Fonda was the site of important social affairs, gambling, fandangos, and balls. This would have put the Donohos at the center of Santa Fe's social life.

It is possible that James' parents ran a hotel called the Los Estados Unidos (the United States). An 1836 property listing of buildings on the "Calle Principal de la Ciudad" (Main Street of the City) and the Rio Chiquita, or Little River (now Water Street), indicates the United States was located just south of the old Fonda.

If indeed Mary Donoho was the only Anglo-American woman in Santa Fe and helped her husband run the old Fonda (or ran it herself while he was trading), she would have had some unique experiences. Becoming fluent in Spanish would have been a necessity. Undoubtedly she knew most of the other traders from the United States, many of whom married or lived with native Santa Fe women, had families, and became citizens of substance. They could well have become close friends of the Donohos.

In the last year of the Donohos' stay in Santa Fe, William ransomed three Texas women from Comanche Indians; however, the three arrived not on the Santa Fe Trail, but by tortuous Indian trails from Texas. Comanches captured Sarah Horn, a Mrs. Harris, and Rachael Parker Plummer in 1836. The women survived incredible hardships and the loss of some of their children. William Donoho effected the rescue of each, either personally or through his direction.

In the fall of 1837, when the Donohos fled Santa Fe, Plummer and Harris went with them; Horn followed in a later caravan. They were the second, third, and fourth Anglo-American women on the Santa Fe Trail and they traveled east, not west.

James Donoho also gives evidence of the fifth woman to travel the trail. Writing to Texas historian John Henry Brown of his 1885 visit to Santa Fe, Donoho added an interesting postscript. "I forgot to mention," he wrote, "that while in Santa Fe it was settled to my satisfaction, that my second sister [Harriet]—born in 1835, and myself, born in 1837, were the first white Americans born in Santa Fe. The honor or distinction (if it can so be called) had been claimed by others in behalf of one born there in 1838, but which was later than my own and sisters." Thus a fifth Anglo-American woman—the mother of the child born there in 1838—was in Santa Fe before Susan Magoffin and probably arrived there via the Santa Fe Trail. Mary Donoho, Sarah Horn, Mrs. Harris, Rachael Plummer, and the unknown mother must now take their places in history as the first Anglo-American women to travel the Santa Fe Trail; Susan Magoffin was the sixth.

IN THE EARLY 1840s a black woman preceded Magoffin on the Santa Fe Trail, but only as far as Bent's Fort, Colorado, so she is not included in the number of women who traveled to Santa Fe ahead of Susan. Known as "Black Charlotte," she was the wife of Dick Green, a slave belonging to Charles Bent. Renowned for her cooking, Charlotte also proudly proclaimed that she was the "only lady in [the] whole damned Indian country!"

Apparently Susan Magoffin did not

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The Search for Mary Donoho

By MARIAN MEYER

In 1984, while researching old issues of the *Santa Fe New Mexican* on microfilm at the New Mexico state library, I noticed a headline that read, "First White Child Born In New Mexico." I could not read the article itself because the small print was blurred, but I made a note to look it up at another library. The note got tossed into a box labeled "Things to do when I have time."

Three years later, on May 5, 1987, I ran across the note and looked it up at the Museum of New Mexico History Library. As I read it the hair stood up on the back of my neck. Dated August 19, 1885, it said that James Donoho, a wealthy hotel owner and cattleman from Clarksville, Texas, was visiting Santa Fe, his 1837 birthplace. It reported that his mother, father, and sister had traveled the Santa Fe Trail in 1833, lived in Santa Fe four years, then returned to Missouri with three former Comanche captives. If this information were true, it meant that James Donoho's mother, not Susan Magoffin, could well have been the first Anglo-American woman to travel the Santa Fe Trail.

All I had to go on were the names of James Donoho and his sister Harriet, born in Santa Fe in 1835, and Clarksville, Texas. I knew that if I could verify the presence of the Donohos in Santa Fe the story would be worth pursuing. Within two weeks I learned from a small Mormon library in Albuquerque that a census of Red River County, Texas, listed James Donoho's birthplace as New Mexico. Also, the Red River County library in Clarksville confirmed that the Donohos had been an important family there and had run the Donoho Hotel for over half a century. I had corroboration enough to follow the story.

An archivist friend, Sherry Smith, and I went to Clarksville, where we met members of the Clarksville Historical Society, the county clerk, and an articulate ninety-seven-year-old woman who had known James Donoho's daughters. We saw a photograph of the Donoho Hotel and found that Donoho headstones abound in the old Clarksville cemetery.

In two days Sherry and I sifted through most of the relevant records in the Red River County courthouse and library, including property and probate ledgers, marriage and cemetery records, and newspaper microfilm. They contained a great deal of information about Mary Donoho, the potential "new first lady" of the Santa Fe Trail.

I took the information to Marc Simmons, the ultimate historian of the Santa Fe Trail. As he examined it his eyes sparkled with excitement. He encouraged me to write an article for *Wagon Tracks*, the newsletter of the Santa Fe Trail Association, and suggested I write a book about Mary Donoho.

In October 1987, Sherry and I went to the state historical society of Missouri at Columbia, where we learned that Mary Donoho's parents, the Dodsons, were among early pioneers of the state. In December I went to Austin, Texas, where I suspected some letters that James Donoho had written might be in the papers of John Henry Brown, a Texas historian, at the University of Texas. My hunch paid off. The letters confirmed the story in *The New Mexican* and became the primary documentation for the Donoho book.

In June 1988, I returned to Clarksville, this time with my husband, Lee. I came up with some new names from more recent Donoho probate records that ultimately led me to Elma Cornelius McWhorter, a great-granddaughter of the Donohos. Her grandfather had been married three times, and I hoped that she was from the union with Mary Ann Donoho, Mary Donoho's first daughter.

Lee and I visited Elma and her nephew, Raymond Cornelius, Mary Donoho's great-great-grandson, in Palestine, Texas, in July. Elma had a tiny ornate tintype, and when I opened it I looked upon the face of Mary Donoho for the first time. I had hit the jackpot.

A final surprise came in January 1991. Ancient City Press in Santa Fe had accepted my book for publication a year earlier, and we were finishing the editorial process. Elma McWhorter's ailing husband died, and she began going through Cornelius family papers. Finding things she did not know existed, she mailed them to me. The box contained lovely tintypes of two of Mary Donoho's daughters, obituaries of Mary Ann and James Donoho, and Cornelius' letters from around the turn of the century. Work on the book halted until I could incorporate that new information into the text.

As Mary Donoho's name becomes more familiar, existing bits of information could become more meaningful. Perhaps one day a letter, a memoir, or a journal from one of the 328 men in her wagon train may surface. The discovery of Mary Donoho may only be a beginning.

Marian Meyer Photo

Tombstone of Mary (1807 1880) and William Donoho (1798 1845) in the Clarksville Cemetery.

Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 10685

The earliest photo of the old Fonda shows the Exchange Hotel in 1855, eighteen years after the Donohos ran it. Known as the Fonda before Kearny came in 1846, it became the U.S. Hotel, then the Exchange.

consider her maid, Jane, as another first American woman to travel the trail. Jane was likely black and possibly a slave, which would account for the oversight. Jane should at least be considered the seventh American woman to reach Santa Fe.

Mary Donoho was red-headed (as her great-great-grandson Ray Cornelius, remembering an old portrait of her, confirmed) and may have been surprised to find two other red-haired women in Santa Fe. One of them was Dona Tules. Born Gertrudes Barcelo to a prominent family in Tome, she earned the prestigious title of *dona* by virtue of her wealth, beauty, talent, and influence. Called the "most skillful monte dealer in the West," she owned an extremely profitable gambling establishment (and probably a brothel) about three blocks from the old Fonda. Many early Puritan writers of Santa Fe lore, who did not understand that the average Santa Fe citizen did not consider smoking, drinking, and gambling to be vices, perpetuated many stories about Tules. One was that she was Governor Manuel Armijo's mistress. Historian Fray Angelico Chavez calls some of the stories myths; the truth probably lies somewhere in between.

Some critics claim that, in the years before her death in 1852, Tules wore a wig, false teeth, and smoked "cigarillos." However, because she had the honored title of *dona* and was an astute businesswoman, Tules may have been a friend of Mary Donoho and could have regularly attended social affairs at the hotel. Mary could have accepted her friendship, as she was probably no prude. In later years her Clarksville hotel boasted a liquor-serving tavern where great, festive balls were commonplace.

The third red-haired woman was Comanche captive Rachael Plummer. A newspaper notice in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* described her has having

Eugene Bowers Collection, courtesy Anne Evans

The Donoho House was famous throughout the South for its hospitality and fine food. This photograph was probably taken after it was rebuilt in 1853 by Mary Donoho.

red hair. It appears she and Mary Donoho became quite close. In her narrative about her captivity (published following her death, which came only a year after her rescue), Rachael wrote almost poetically, saying "I have no language to express my gratitude to Mrs. Donoho. I found in her a mother, a sister, to condole with me in my misfortune...a friend who was continually pouring the sweet oil of consolation into my wounded and trembling soul."

Sarah Horn wrote a similar story when she returned to Missouri. Both narratives are a litany of the pain the women suffered when Comanches physically abused them or mistreated or killed their children. Plummer, Horn, and Mrs. Harris stayed for a time with Mary Donoho's mother, Lucy Dodson, in Missouri. Sadly, Horn and Harris also died within a year of their rescues.

After their return to Missouri, Mary and her children stayed with Lucy while William accompanied Rachael Plummer to her relatives' home in Texas. In 1838 he returned to New Mexico to wind up his affairs there. In August of that year he witnessed the sale of a mule, signing the only document now in New Mexico archives that bears his name.

Donoho moved his family to Clarksville, Texas, in October 1839. Their fourth child, Lucy, was born in December. A fifth, Penelope, was born in 1842, and Susan, their sixth, was born in 1844. Harriet, the daughter born in Santa Fe in 1835, died in 1842, and Lucy died at age seven.

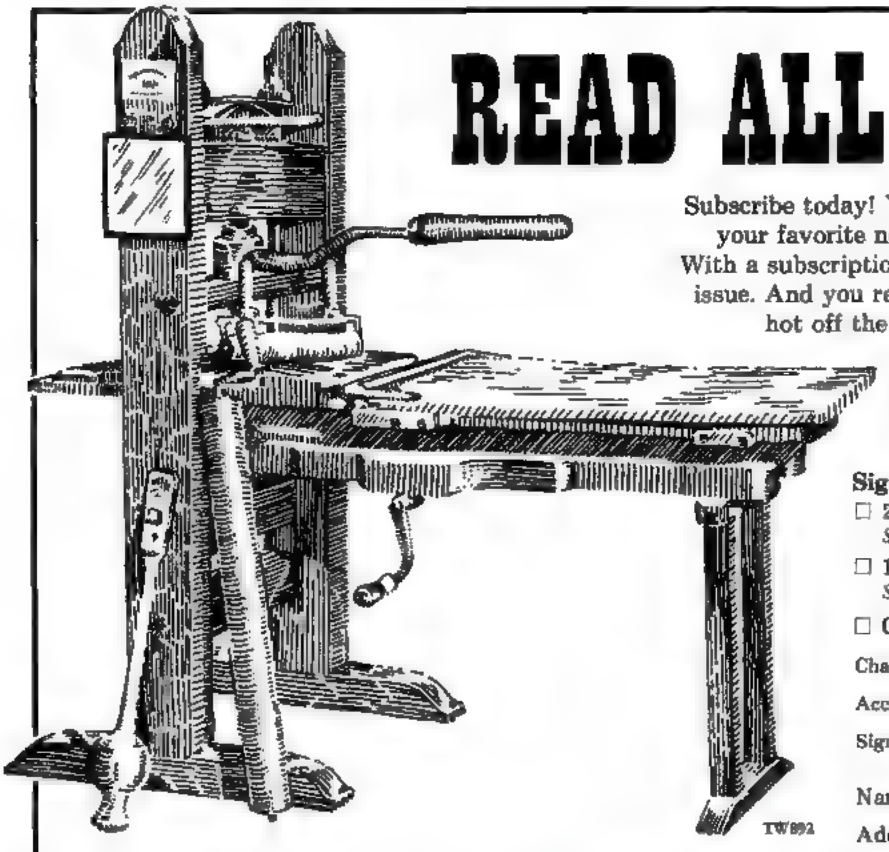
William's trading and hotel business in Santa Fe must have been lucrative because in his six years in Clarksville he bought over 10,000 acres of land. He also founded the Donoho Hotel, which became an important hostelry in east Texas for over fifty years.

WILLIAM DIED of apoplexy in 1845, leaving no will. Mary spent six years untangling his complex estate, but wound up with the hotel, which prospered under her management. She became a prominent citizen of Clarksville.

Mary outlived all five of her daughters. Penelope married John C. Burks, an attorney. She died in childbirth at age seventeen, and shortly after, her sister, Susan, married widower Burks. Susan died about a year later, perhaps also in childbirth. She was sixteen. Mary Ann, the daughter who traveled the Santa Fe Trail as a baby, married at fourteen, became a widow and married again at thirty-one, and died at age forty.

When Mary Donoho died at age seventy-three in 1880, her son James and Mary Ann's children shared her sizeable estate. James inherited the Donoho Hotel and immediately began remodeling and enlarging it—perhaps something his strong-willed mother had resisted. From the Civil War on, the hotel was a stage stand for most of Texas and neighboring states.

James called his mother a "woman of energy and commanding spirit." Her decision to brave the well-publicized terrors of the Santa Fe Trail when, presumably, no other women were doing so, demonstrates that she was a woman of courage. Widowed and raising six children alone, all the while successfully managing a popular hostelry, suggests that she was a woman of uncommon ability and fortitude.



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Books

Beneath the Horizon

Canyon Visions, by Dan Flores and Amy G. Winton. (Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, Texas 79409-1037. $29.00 cloth bound, $20.00 paper bound.)

This volume has the look—if not the heft—of one of those "coffee table books," but it is much more than just a living room decoration. This is an eye-opening introduction to the beautiful country lying *below* the horizon of the Texas panhandle and the Llano Estacado. Travelers, even locals, use arrow-straight highways through boring cotton fields, unaware that nearby are beautiful draws, breaks, badlands, and canyons with eroded mesas, chimneys, and pedestals. Hidden here, too, are streams, pools, waterfalls, and ancient Indian petroglyphs. The flora of old on the flatlands has become cropland, but in the canyons cottonwoods, yuccas (or Spanish bayonets), chollas, prickly pear cacti, cedars, salt cedars, and showy wildflowers still bloom.

Flores, an excellent writer, is an even better photographer. His many images evoke the grandeur of the gashes in the West Texas tableland. The public has "discovered" (and, alas, manhandled) only one of them—Palo Duro Canyon. Hopefully this book will help preserve, in a semi-wild condition, Tule, Caprock, Yellow House, and other canyons for all of us. The pastels of artist Winton complement Flores' words and pictures. She provides the "feel" of the canyonlands, where Flores' photos give the look of the landscape.

As Larry McMurtry reminds us in a (too short) foreword, the canyons of the escarpment's edge above the Brazos, Pease, Red, and other rivers are subtle, not awesome like the Grand Canyon. They are more human in scale, and approachable, like Arizona's Walnut Canyon. They offer us more close-ups than wide-angle views. But all of them are splendid exhibits of nature's handiwork in forms, textures, and colors. Above all, they display that magical southwestern light which astounded Georgia O'Keeffe when she first encountered it a little bit west of this canyon country.

Flores' succinct text is sometimes poetic, but not uncomfortable. His photographs are simply splendid, beautiful visions of glorious country. I highly recommend this extra-illustrated book.—*Richard Dillon, Mill Valley, California.*

Indian Fighting Army

Myles Keogh: The Life and Legend of an "Irish Dragoon" with the Seventh Cavalry, edited and compiled by John P. Langellier. (Upton and Sons, 917 Hillcrest, El Segundo, California 90245. $75.00 cloth trade edition; $150.00 autographed, leather bound.)

At first glance *Myles Keogh: The Life and Legend of an "Irish Dragoon" with the Seventh Cavalry* might appear to be a case of intellectual overkill. Historian John Langellier has brought the considerable talent and erudition of many scholars to bear on Myles Keogh, who gained his place in history because of his horse, Comanche, reputedly the only "survivor" of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. As one wit of my acquaintance recently remarked, Comanche had a better press agent than the other horses who survived.

First appearances are deceiving, however, as this book uses the life of Keogh as an *entreé* to explore a wide range of issues affecting the life and times of the Indian fighting army. Keogh's birth in Ireland and his miliary service in Italy remind readers that officers of foreign birth were not unusual in the United States Army. The Civil War was the great formative military experience in the lives of many of the officers of that generation, and Keogh was no exception, as Brian C. Pohanka notes in a fine essay. Dr. Elizabeth A. Lawrence analyzes the curious notoriety of Comanche in "The Legend Begins: Comanche—The Horse Who Conferred Fame on His Rider." Father Vincent Heier notes Keogh's continuing hold on the popular imagination in "The Legend Continues: A Checklist of Keogh in Fiction, Poetry, and Film."

The essays show Keogh's life, times, and loves, and Langellier steers this volume through Keogh's remarkable life to his abrupt, violent death in battle. Richard A. Fox, Jr., uses archaeological data to describe the end of Keogh and his immediate command. Fox gives readers a vivid glimpse of what Keogh faced as Lakotas and Northern Cheyennes overwhelmed his position.

A remarkable range of men, both Indian and white, clashed at the Little Bighorn. Books about specific people, such as *Myles Keogh*, may be the best way to comprehend the past as the lives of individuals give readers a chance to enter and fathom the great stream of history.—*Joseph C. Porter, Omaha, Nebraska.*

Wounded Knee Remembered

Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations. (Kifaru Productions, 1550 California Street, Suite 275, San Francisco, California 94109. $29.95, video.)

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Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations is an evocative, powerful documentary film that chronicles the ceremony of Lakota Sioux to heal their grief over the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890. Most non-Indians have no comprehension of the emotional trauma the massacre left upon Lakotas who regard the incident as a horrific symbol of their conflict with whites.

In the 1980s, Lakota spiritual and community leaders determined to sacrifice, pray, and perform a ritual, formal period of mourning for those killed at Wounded Knee. Beginning in 1986, the Bigfoot Memorial Riders met where Sitting Bull was killed in 1890. They then rode their horses along the route that Sitting Bull's followers took to the camp of Chief Big Foot, then rode the trail to Wounded Knee, South Dakota, where Big Foot's band had their terrible confrontation with the Seventh Cavalry, and where the victims are buried in a mass grave.

The Big Foot Memorial Riders completed the ride four times between 1986 and 1989, and made their fifth and final ride in 1990 on the one-hundredth anniversary of the massacre. The winter of 1990–91 on the Northern Plains severely tested the riders, who rode hundreds of miles in temperatures of thirty degrees below zero with windchill factors of eighty below—weather so cold it cracked engine blocks and killed livestock.

Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations tells three stories. The first is Lakota views of their conflict with whites. On the film they tell their history as they see it, and they eschew accounts written by non-Indian historians. Non-Indians will dispute Lakota accounts of Lakota-white relations, especially of the immediate circumstances surrounding the massacre. Lakotas and historians do not agree on the details of the massacre, and non-Indians should see the film as a statement of Lakota convictions about Wounded Knee. Likewise, viewers should remember that a people's memory of an event becomes as much a part of its history as do the details. Anyone who has spent time with Lakotas will recognize *Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations* as a clear, direct statement of how they remember Wounded Knee.

The second theme of the video is the hope of the Big Foot Memorial Riders to move beyond the memory of Wounded Knee to future generations of Lakotas. A third important theme is how Lakota values and traditions shape and permeate any Lakota undertaking in today's world.

The video's production values are excellent, and the documentary makes fine use of historic photographs, traditional Lakota music, contemporary Lakota art, and film footage shot on site. Contemporary Lakotas tell their perspectives of the Wounded Knee Massacre. *Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations* will not reconcile the differences between Lakota perspectives and historians' accounts; rather, it is a portrait of Lakota memories central to their history.—*Joseph C. Porter, Omaha, Nebraska.*

Action Along the River

Revolution on the Rio Grande: Mexican Raids and Army Pursuits, 1916–19, by Glenn Justice. (Texas Western Press, The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, Texas 79968. $10.00, paper bound.)

Most Americans know a little about Pancho Villa's 1916 raid on Columbus, New Mexico, which instigated General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing's yearlong punitive expedition into Mexico. Many writers say that Villa's Columbus raid was the only attack foreign nationals ever made on American soil. That ignores the War of 1812, of course, but more significantly it ignores a series of savage Mexican forays into Texas, and bitter American reprisals. In *Revolution on the Rio Grande*, Glenn Justice describes those events.

Justice sets his scene well. He explains the chaotic political situation in Mexico as played out against the remote, rugged grandeur of the Big Bend country. Battered and remorseless revolutionaries under Villa and other outlaw chieftains took refuge south of the Rio Grande. Over in Texas, a steady United States military buildup of camps and posts promised to repel any aggression. American's even had contingency plans for occupying Chihuahua.

About fifty Mexican raiders struck the isolated buildings of the Brite Ranch on Christmas Day, 1917. Oddly, random visitors dropping in on the Brites to celebrate the holidays continually interrupted the day-long fight. During the attack, three Americans were slain, but within hours the cavalry had pursued the outlaws across the river into Mexico, killing several of them.

A year later, a group of cavalry and a squad of Texas Rangers invaded Porvenir, Chihuahua, a Mexican border town nearly one hundred miles east of El Paso. The rangers selected fifteen Mexican adult male prisoners and executed them. That slaughter led to a raid on the Neville Ranch in Texas and the death of Glen Neville, plus the mutilation murder of a Mexican woman. The bandit trail disappeared toward Pilares, Chihuahua, where a pursuing American military unit killed thirty-three, wounded eight, and burned the village.

The Mexican border remained the scene of outlaw and military clashes, kidnappings, and air searches, but gradually the violence ended. The United States Army marched away, and the people of the borderlands returned to their former lives.—*Leon Metz, El Paso, Texas.*

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Arizona Posse vs the Bill Smith Gang

—October 8, 1901; Reservation Creek, Arizona—

By BILL O'NEAL

The Arizona Rangers were organized in the fall of 1901, and an immediate target of the new company of lawmen was the Bill Smith gang. Those rustlers made their headquarters in northern Graham County, where Smith and his younger brothers and sister lived at their mother's home on the Blue River, near Harper's Mill. Captain Burt Mossman assigned Rangers Carlos Tafolla and Duane Hamblin to search for the Smith Gang.

Bill Smith reportedly had served an apprenticeship in frontier chicanery with the Dalton brothers, and by the turn of the century he had become Arizona's most notorious cattle rustler. He was first arrested in 1898 for cutting out and weaning a score of calves from ranchers Henry Barrett and Bill Phelps. Smith was incarcerated at St. Johns, Arizona, where jailer Tom Berry found him to be such a hard sleeper that it was necessary to enter his cell at breakfast time to awaken him.

But Berry was merely the victim of a ruse. One morning when he walked into the cell, Berry found himself staring into the muzzle of a .45 caliber revolver that Al Smith had smuggled in to his brother. Smith locked Berry inside the cell, then slipped out to a woodshed where Al had stashed a Winchester and ammunition.

After his escape, Smith fled to New Mexico for a year. When he returned to Arizona he was wanted for train robbery, and he continued to steal cattle and horses, often from Henry Barrett. During the first week of October 1901, the Bill Smith gang was spotted heading south near Springerville with a herd of horses. A couple days later, one of the younger Smith brothers rode into St. Johns to buy supplies; he casually asked of Barrett's whereabouts.

The tough old rancher heard of the inquiry and organized a posse. Barrett rode with Hank Sharp, Pete Peterson, and Elija Holgate to Greer, where Tafolla and Hamblin joined them.

The posse followed the trail three miles south to Sheep Crossing of the Little Colorado River and on to Lorenzo Crosby's ranch on the Black River. There the posse enlisted Crosby and brothers Bill and Arch Maxwell. The Maxwells, regarded as superb scouts, had been friends with the Smiths until the gang made off with several horses from the Maxwell range.

The rustlers' trail led south to Big Lake, Dead Man's Crossing on the Black River, and to Pete Slaughter's ranch, where according to the signs, the gang had camped. The posse pitched camp at the same site. The next day, Tuesday, October 8, they followed the

Arizona Historical Society

Arizona Ranger Duane Hamblin and his family.

trail six miles down the west bank of the Black River.

Little wilderness in the United States is more beautiful or more forbidding than the Black River Country. In October temperatures are crisp during the day and frigid at night, and the forests are a riot of orange and red leaves, with a thick carpet of pine needles on the ground. Soaring mountains bristle with towering pine and spruce trees, cedars, and junipers. The area is difficult to traverse: narrow winding valleys are too thickly forested for easy passage, while steep mountainsides form treacherous, boulder-strewn angles littered with fallen timber. The almost impenetrable wilderness provided a natural hideout for fugitives.

On October 8 the outlaws were in camp at Reservation Creek in a gorge 200 yards wide and one hundred feet deep near the headwaters of Black River. The gang had shot a bear and late that cold afternoon were skinning the beast. Some of the gang members had started supper, while bloodhounds prowled the camp perimeter. One hound nervously barked an alarm, and Bill Smith scrambled to the top of a rim for a look. He darted back to camp with news that several men were approaching. Al and George Smith began to move the horses out of the clearing.

THE POSSE had heard the three rifle shots that brought down the bear, and a ride of half a mile took them to a bloody trail in the snow. Sign indicated that two men were packing out freshly killed game on a horse. The posse, sensing their prey, followed the trail in the final hour of daylight.

The nine posse members tied their horses to a cluster of bushes and crept the last 300 yards through the snow on foot. They moved in from the west as the sun set between Mount Ord and Old Baldy. The outlaws thus enjoyed the protection of a shadowed gorge, while sun rays, highlighting the rim to the east, made it difficult to fire into the rustlers' camp. Most of the possemen crawled to prone positions on the rim, but the two Rangers and Bill Maxwell boldly advanced into the clearing. In the open, they were starkly silhouetted against the whiteness of the snow.

Barrett shouted a warning to get down. Hamblin flattened onto the

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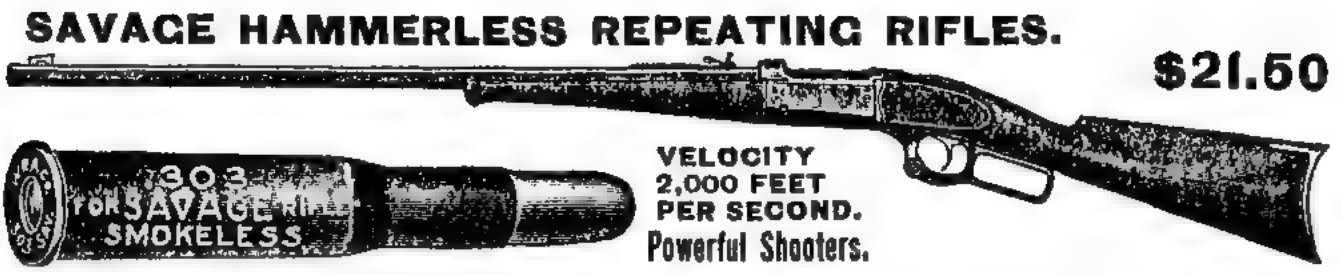

Outlaw leader Bill Smith gunned down two posse members with a new .303 Savage repeating rifle.

ground, but Tafolla and Maxwell ignored the danger. Maxwell called out an order to surrender.

"All right," replied Bill Smith. "Which way do you want us to come out?"

"Come out this way," directed Maxwell.

The outlaw leader walked toward the lawmen, dragging a new Savage .303 rifle behind him. Suddenly, Smith brought up the repeater and opened fire from a distance of forty feet. Tafolla went down, shot through the torso; Maxwell was hit in the forehead and died instantly. Smith darted for cover as the other outlaws began firing from behind tree trunks. Tafolla gamely emptied his Winchester, and his companions opened up from the rim.

Most of the rifles were loaded with black powder cartridges, and a haze of white smoke began to spread through the gorge as gunshots echoed off the surrounding walls. Barrett's fire was especially effective; the rancher used a Spanish Mauser captured in Cuba, and the smokeless, steel-jacketed rounds ripped through the little pine trees that shielded the outlaws. Two rustlers were wounded, shot in the foot and leg, and one of their hounds was killed. After a few moments, the gunfire ended as the gang retreated into the timber.

Hamblin had worked his way around to the outlaw mounts during the shooting. He found nine saddle horses and a pack mule, drove the animals away, and put the rustlers afoot. Desperately, Smith and his men pressed into the wilderness and escaped into the sudden mountain nightfall.

Back in the clearing Tafolla lay on his back, shot twice through the middle and moaning for water. Bill Maxwell was dead; his big hat had three bullet holes in the crown. As the posse closed in they found the dead hound along with saddles, bridles, camp gear, and personal belongings the fleeing outlaws had abandoned. Bullet marks scarred tree

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trunks throughout the gorge; the clearing would become known as the Battle Ground. The posse left Maxwell's hat on the ground, and cowboys who later rode through the Battle Ground superstitiously refused to touch the bullet-riddled sombrero.

Bill Maxwell was carried to where the posse had tethered their horses and laid out on two saddle blankets. Hank Sharp and Arch Maxwell rode east for help, while Hamblin, Barrett, Peterson, Holgate, and Crosby stayed behind to provide crude care for the agonized Tafolla. Before he lost consciousness Tafolla, realizing he was dying, pulled a silver dollar from his pants pocket and handed it to Barrett.

"GIVE THIS dollar to my wife," he gasped. "It, and the month's wages coming to me, will be all she'll ever have."

Tafolla died at midnight. Captain Mossman later delivered the silver dollar to Tafolla's wife in St. Johns, and arranged for the widow to receive a small pension. Mossman obtained two Apache trackers from the San Carlos Indian Agency and launched a search which followed the outlaws into New Mexico. But heavy snows began to fall and, after more than two weeks of fruitless pursuit, the Rangers reluctantly called off the hunt.

As Bill Smith led his gang through the snow-covered wilderness, the fugitives roused a slumbering camp of drovers and obtained a meal. The cowboys had heard of the fight and revealed the identity of the dead men.

"Well, I'm sure, sure sorry," said the outlaw leader after learning that Bill Maxwell had been slain. "When he stood up that way we thought it was Barrett, he was the man we wanted. We feel mighty sorry over killing Bill Maxwell, he was a good friend of ours. Tell Bill's mother for us that we're very sorry we killed him."

The Smith Gang never resumed its activities in Arizona. Bill and Al Smith reportedly made their way to Galveston, Texas, where they took a boat to Argentina. In 1909 George Smith surrendered himself to the sheriff of Graham County, but as charges had been filed against him in Apache County, he was released from custody. George Smith settled at his mother's ranch on the Blue River and tended to her little herd of cattle. At least a favorite haunt of rustlers had been penetrated, and Arizona was rid of the Smith Gang.

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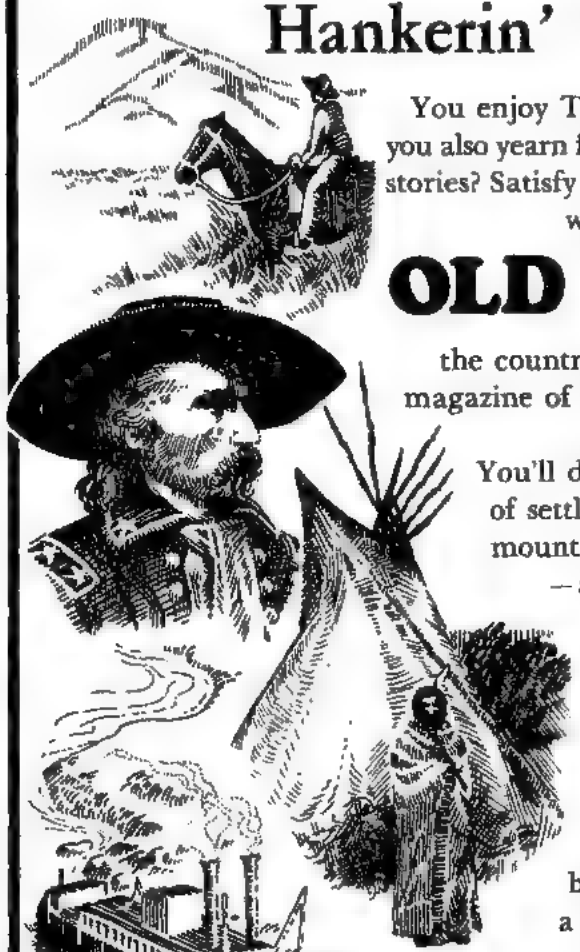

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Buy a Chance . . . Win a Hotel

By AGNES SIEVERS

The old Hotel Bingham was a landmark of Aberdeen, Idaho, before its demolition several years ago. Many older residents have fond memories of the building and the special part it played in an unusual early-day lottery.

In 1913, when Aberdeen was in its infancy, a promotor named L.R. Lathrop, then president and manager of the Aberdeen Valley Investment Company, started a unique campaign to buy up property that was for sale in or near Aberdeen, then sell chances on the properties, which he would raffle off at a later date. The Hotel Bingham, valued at $10,000, topped the list, which also included fourteen bungalows with lots, valued at $16,800; an alfalfa mill worth $5,200; two forty-acre farms listed at $8,000; sixteen five-acre tracts worth $10,000; seven two-and-one-half-acre tracts valued at $7,000; 1,309 residence lots worth $150–200 each; and 150 business lots worth $150–660 each.

Salesmen scattered all over the western states, selling raffle tickets for $150 each, or ten dollars down and ten dollars a month. They advertised the area in attractive folders as "The Nile of America" and a "Government Ex-

Author's Photo

Hotel Bingham, Aberdeen, Idaho.

periment Farm," with the notation, "You Can't Lose, Fair to Everyone." The salesmen even touted the area's weather as wonderful.

On April 15, 1914, the raffle was held in front of the Hotel Bingham. A special train came to Aberdeen from Butte, Montana, as salesmen had sold many tickets in Montana. A large crowd gathered, with ticket holders anxiously waiting to see if they would win. A Mrs.

Salesmen scattered all over the western states, selling raffle tickets for $150 each, or ten dollars down and ten dollars a month. They advertised the area in folders as "The Nile of America" and a "Government Experiment Farm," with the notation, "You Can't Lose, Fair to Everyone."

Tom Burton from Butte drew the winning tickets, and many of the prizes went to Montana residents.

A friendly Irishman named Con Cream won the Bingham Hotel. Having no use for a hotel, he traded it for a farm. The alfalfa mill went to Leonard Byall, of Hazen, Nevada, but he never used it. C.A. LaCroix, of Dillon, Montana, won one forty-acre farm, the other went to Horace Turner of Lavina, Montana. Perry M. Stout, Herman Pieske, Anna Good, Fred J. Dittman, V.F. Wootton, F.E. Ellerman, Arriola Yragerri, Joseph and Helen Landusky, H.H. Hamilton, M. Oakland, T.M. Prudhomme, H.S. Harper, J.A. Moore, and H.H. Hansen won the fourteen bungalows.

The Hotel Bingham was Aberdeen's center of activity for many years. It not only served weary travelers, but served as a meeting place, social hall, and even a dentist's office. The hotel is gone, but an older generation who helped Aberdeen grow remembers it and the excitement of the raffle.

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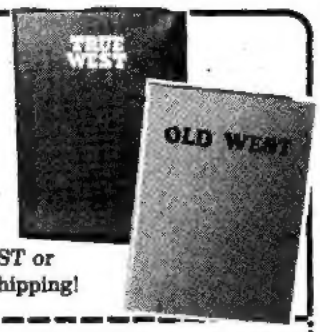

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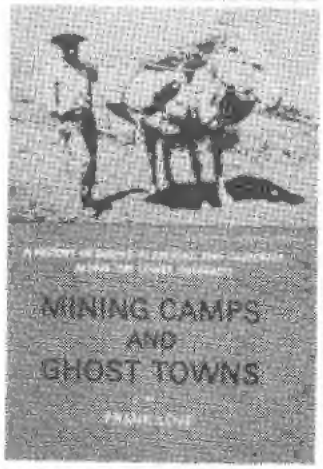

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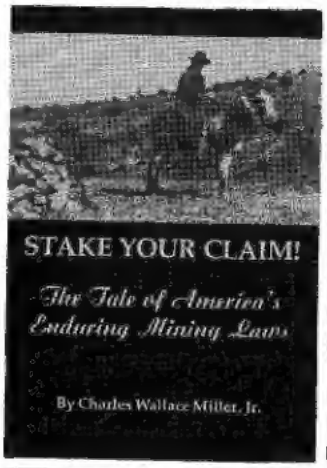

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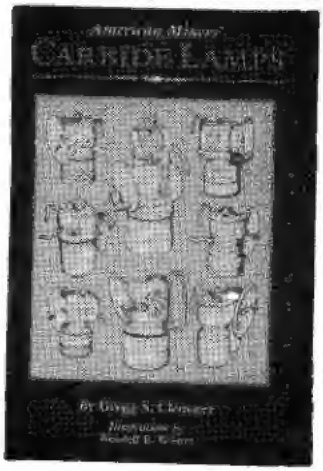

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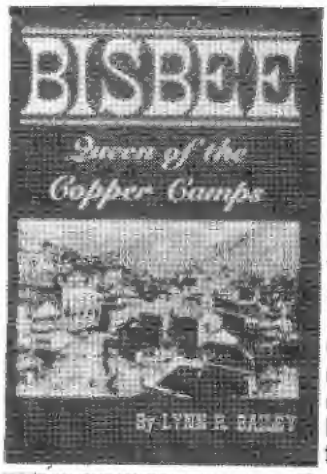

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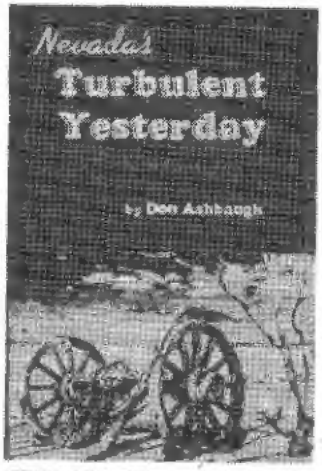

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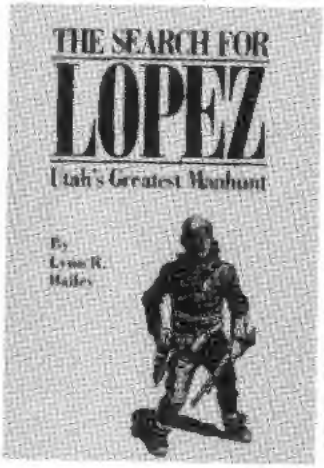

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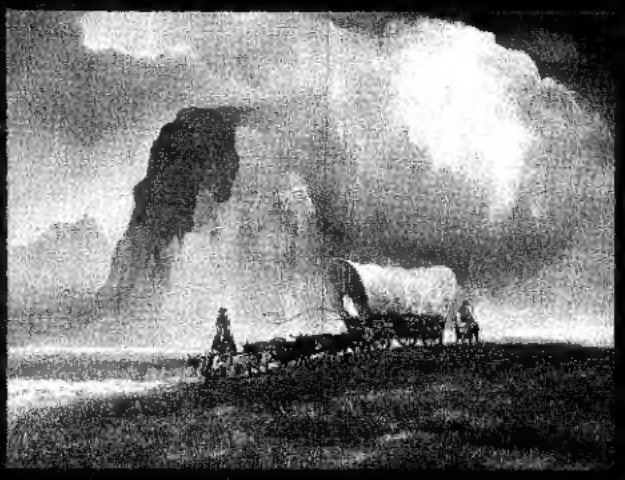

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